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ABSTRACT

The Miscellaneous section of the Proceedings contains the following 15 papers: "Computer Literacy in the Newsroom: A Model for Learning" (Bruce Garrison); "Newspaper Source Use on the Environmental Beat: A Comparative Case Study" (Stephen Lacy and David C. Coulson); "Historical Survey of Media Coverage of Biotechnology in the United States, 1970 to 1996" (Bruce V. Lewenstein, Tracy Allaman, and Shobita Parthasarathy); "Essential and Constructed: Community and Identity in an Online Television Fandom" (Cinda L. Gillilan); "National Print Media Coverage of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, 1911-1917" (Dane S. Claussen); "Miracle in South Africa: A Historical Review of U.S. Magazines' Coverage of the First Heart Transplant" (Raymond N. Ankney); "Physiographic Aggregation and Segmentation: Inclusion of Visually-Detected Physically Impaired Role Models in Advertisements" (Dennis Ganahl and Jeff Kallem); "Effectiveness of Negative Political Advertising" (Won Ho Chang, Sung Wook Shim, and Jaejin Park); "Predicting Successful Internships" (Fred Beard and Linda Morton); "Evaluating Outcomes: Service Learning in the Communication Discipline" (Julia B. Corbett and April R. Kendall); "Textbooks and Teaching: A Lesson from Students" (Donna Besser, Gerald Stone, and Luan Nan); "Assessing Writing by Analyzing Writing: Ability Grouping and Student Performance" (Kristie Bunton, Stacey Frank Kanihan, and Mark Neuzil); "Ethical Pluralism: Defining Its Dimensions" (Kathryn B. Campbell); "Downsizing, Rightsizing, and Other Euphemisms: The Questionable Ethics of Some Corporate Communications" (James L. Aucoin and Jill R. Haynes); and "Learning to be a Journalist: A Preliminary Study of Cyborgs, College Newsworkers and RSI Work Culture" (Catherine L. Marston). (PA)

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COMPUTER LITERACY IN THE NEWSROOM:

A MODEL FOR LEARNING

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A paper presented to the Investigative Reporters and Editors and the Council of Affiliates at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual meeting, Baltimore, August 1998. Portions of this paper will appear in Bruce Garrison, *Computer-Assisted Reporting*, second edition, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, N.J., in press, 1998.

COMPUTER LITERACY IN THE NEWSROOM: A MODEL FOR LEARNING

ABSTRACT

Computing has become a critical part of journalism and investigative reporting. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the issues involved in increasing computer literacy in newsrooms and to suggest a model for attaining different levels of computer skills needed for newsgathering in 1998. This paper proposes a five-stage model for introduction of computer literacy in the newsroom. Stages include basic operational mastery, online access capabilities, intermediate personal computer skills, database creation and analysis skills, and developmental computer skills.

COMPUTER LITERACY IN THE NEWSROOM:
A MODEL FOR LEARNING

Some journalists, like many working adults, enjoy the newsgathering benefits of computing. Some of their colleagues, though, simply dislike using computers, but use them in a minimal manner because their work requires it. Still others, despite nearly two decades of desktop computing in the United States, do not use them and may even be *afraid* of PCs. Some experts have labeled the fear of computers and other forms of modern mass communication a "technophobia" (Donoho, 1994). While this may seem amusing to computer-literate individuals in newsrooms, technophobia can be a time-consuming and expensive problem. It can even affect the quality of newsgathering, especially for sophisticated investigative stories and projects. There is no doubt that just about every newsroom has one or more *technophobes*. Recent research has determined that as much as 85 percent of American adults may have some form of technophobia (Hayes, 1997). These individuals still try to get their assigned work completed with minimal interaction with a computer, an online research service, E-mail, a fax machine, voice mail, or any other electronic devices or services. While the numbers of technophobes in newsrooms may not be as high, the levels of computer skills of many journalists remain at writing and editing with a word processor or creating artwork with a graphics program. Increasingly, it appears that investigative journalists are faced with the prospects of doing their work using computers. The issue of their computer literacy is becoming an important one in both print and broadcast newsrooms.

Society and its work tools have changed in this decade. Advances in computing, combined

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with the worldwide networking of the Internet, have made the work environment very different for those who work in the news media. Journalists must change their habits as new tools are developed.

"You can't walk into the newsroom of even the smallest operation and not find some sort of personal computer. How well it is used depends very much on the skills of the user. Even a small operation can use it to keep track of voting records of a municipal council," says John Mollwitz (1994), an editor and computer specialist for the Milwaukee *Journal-Sentinel*. "My experience is that computer skills, as well as computer acceptance, are much greater in small operations, both print and broadcast. The bigger the operation, the more likely there will be someone in-house to install a modem and software, do online research, set up databases, sort out information and a myriad of other tasks. There is little incentive to learn anything about computers until a light bulb explodes and some says, 'I'm 40, and I don't even know what a byte is. Somehow I'm going to have to learn this stuff.' Meanwhile, the 40-year-old on a small weekly already knows."

Eric Schoch, a science and technology writer for the *Indianapolis Star* and *Indianapolis News*, believes computer literacy is not a major matter, but it will gradually become more important for journalists. "I think everyone in a newsroom should get basic introductory training in the use and capabilities of the basic CAR tools, including spreadsheets, databases and Internet searching. Everyone should have a general understanding of what these tools can do— and that includes editors, who in my experience are often the last to sign up for this sort of training when it's offered," Schoch (1997) stated. "However, the only way to fully understand how to use software effectively is to do your own work with it— run city budgets through a spreadsheet yourself, for example. That's when more advanced training is useful, when you've got real work to do. Effective, widespread use of CAR in a newsroom requires someone who is both an expert resource for reporters and an advocate or "champion" for it. It also requires a newsroom atmosphere that encourages the use of CAR, which is why it's important that editors understand these tools and their potential."

The digital revolution in newsrooms is well underway. A growing amount of investigative journalism has become dependent on computers to access public and private sector databases and documents (Garrison, 1996). Numerous computer-based investigative reporting projects, many quantitative in nature, have been recognized for their policy-changing impact on their communities (Garrison, 1996). For journalists who have not yet discovered the personal computer as a reporting and information gathering tool, it may not be a matter of technophobia. It is more likely a matter of not being given the opportunity to learn about computers. Some newsrooms have not yet made the transition to PC-based newsroom systems or the newsrooms have PCs but no advanced software tools. Usually, the explanation offered is high cost of computer technology, lack of time to learn, lack of expertise, no hardware or software, not a high priority, just starting, or no access to local information in digital form (Garrison, 1997). There are other journalists— in newsroom situations where they could try new computer-assisted reporting approaches— who just have not been aware of them or are not sufficiently motivated to learn. Some newsroom staff members have just been too busy with other editorial responsibilities to learn how to get a little bit more from their computing systems. They can learn; they even want to learn.

Because of the importance of computer learning in newsrooms and the impact of computing on general and investigative newsgathering, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the issues involved in increasing computer literacy in newsrooms. Furthermore, its purpose is to propose a model for attaining different levels of computer skills needed for newsgathering in 1998. Computing is such a critical part of journalism today that it does not make sense to attempt investigative reporting without it.

TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED NEWSROOMS

News organizations at the cutting edge of technology adoption in newsgathering and news distribution may be referred to as *technologically advanced newsrooms*, or *TANs*. These news organizations have embraced personal computing and other computer-driven technologies for all they are worth and, as a result, have enhanced their community news coverage with the PC's information retrieval and analytical power. Many small publications and most television newsrooms have lagged in technological advancements related to advanced reporting with computers, such as special projects and investigations. While they have often invested heavily in production-related computing, they have not been so quick to provide computers capable of CAR that are accessible to all journalists in the newsroom.

Most news organizations are at least those aware of what could be called the "re-computerization of newsrooms" and they are hustling to remain current. Other news organizations have chosen to ignore the transition and are operating on their own technological terms. Some businesses, particularly the very large ones, are slow to make changes in computing software and hardware. This is particularly true in the corporate world. Problems often arise from information systems administrative policies and priorities. The same can be true of news-oriented companies, regardless of their size.

Technologically advanced newsrooms are necessarily not places loaded with pricey television sets with satellite or cable hook-ups, cellular telephones, VCRs, fax machines, voice mail, video conferencing, satellite dishes, or other modern business office tools. It would be a safe bet, though, that news organizations with TANs probably have, and use, those devices in addition to their personal computer system. TANs may be defined as newsrooms that have moved beyond simple use of personal computers for word processing and production. TANs have achieved a greater realization of the retrieval and analytical power of personal computing. The movement has begun, but not many newspapers and newsmagazines in the United States have achieved technologically advanced newsrooms. Very few television and radio stations have them in place, either. Without question, the University of Miami national CAR Research Project studies between 1993 and 1998 have established this fact (Garrison, 1997; Garrison, 1996; see also http://www.miami.edu/com/car/index.htm). The changes have begun to occur, especially at larger newspapers, the wire services, a few national news magazines, and at some levels at the broadcast networks, but the transition will probably require the rest of this decade to completely take place, perhaps even longer. In essence, the term "TAN" simply reflects a state of operation and a state of mind about the practicality of computing as part of the information gathering and processing effort.

Technologically advanced newsroom status is not an end accomplishment so much as it is a level of operation achieved on an on-going basis. Lisa Van Asch (1994), a News Research Department staff member at the Raleigh *News & Observer*, believes newsroom technology will continue to evolve, as will her own role:

> News research's role is going to change again soon— we're still information retrievers (and generators), but we're also evolving into information mentors. Reporters and editors are relying on us to teach them how to use this stuff. They want to be able to do some of their own research, they want to be able to use their computers at home, they want to explore the Internet, and they want to analyze their own data and create their own databases. This scares lots of news librarians and researchers— they think we won't be necessary anymore if we train our 'clients' to do the job themselves. I disagree. I think as teachers we will become more important, and we'll develop a better relationship with the newsroom along the way. Who better to teach them? Researchers and librarians have used computers for years, we're service-oriented, we know where the goods are, and we are fanatical about accuracy. And we're always here to answer questions. I am, of course, not talking about giving reporters access to big-money commercial databases like Lexis / Nexis or Dialog. That's where the researcher's expertise comes in. But I think reporters should know how to access public records, how to navigate the Internet (how to send E-mail, join a Newsgroup, find other libraries and databases), how to create a Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet and analyze data (like the county budget) on it, and how to search CDs and use our in-house databases to enhance their stories. The *N&O* has always stressed involvement and inclusion— we have held many classes for reporters and editors on computer-assisted reporting.

For a technologically resistant newspaper to move forward will require some coordinated and designed effort, perhaps starting at the top. The University of Miami CAR Research Project studies have determined that the problems do not always lie in the rank and file areas of the newsroom. They can, at times, exist in their most severe form at the very top (Garrison, 1995).

In local television station newsrooms, the problem has been getting the right hardware for advanced forms of newsgathering. Some stations with the right resources just have not used them for anything beyond online research or World Wide Web accessibility. But this is gradually changing as individuals with the awareness and knowledge to use the tools are added to the staff. Even larger market stations have been slow to adopt CAR, usually acquiring the hardware and software for an individual already on staff who has "computer geek" tendencies. Few have added individuals or provided training to existing staff to develop expertise in working with computers to gather and process information. Phoenix-based KPNX-TV CAR Specialist Wes Williams (1997) explained:

> Most [television] newsrooms were still using typewriters until this decade. Newspapers were computerized in the 1970s. I was using a laptop to send my stories by modem when I worked for a newspaper one summer in 1989. Newspapers needed computers to make layout easier. Newsroom computers didn't make a visible difference on the air in TV news. However, once folks saw the advantage of merging the wire with a word processor and the TelePrompTer and the assignment desk and the Rolodex and the archive, TV newsrooms bought into computers. Then we realized some of these computers could do other things, too, such as dial up Lexis-Nexis. Now, with Windows and Mac graphical user interfaces, they're so much easier for everyone to use. Database journalism is still sort of 'out there' for some folks, but they love it when you can tell them which schools had the most violent crimes or where the most cars are stolen in town or how much money was spent on furniture at the state capitol.

Becoming computer literate at the individual level and developing a technologically advanced newsroom bring with it more than academic-sounding labels. The transition brings a change in the way news reporting is approached and the types of information that are reported. Online research consultant and journalist Tom Koch (1991) has written that online services affect the narrative form of news writing. He argues that online information changes relations between writers and the subjects about which they write. Koch says the role of the news media in a democratic society is changing and how journalists use online services will have an impact on society, politics, and culture. How much is traditional contemporary news reporting limited by ordinary, more conventional sources and tools? Is CAR even more to journalism than what Philip Meyer called the same old journalism, but with "new tools" (1979, p. 15)?

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPUTER EDUCATION

The speed at which computerization is occurring in the communications industry and journalism education, is quite amazing to most people, especially managers and administrators. It is no wonder that many people feel computer technology, as well as other electronic advances, is zooming past. The rapid recent changes occurring in use of the Internet, for example, are often frustrating because keeping up seems hopeless. Growth in computer education in public and private schools in some parts of the country is rapidly creating a generation gap in computer literacy. Children are much more comfortable than their parents with home computers— a phenomenon that took place during much of the past decade. The gap is making it almost impossible to consider how different younger people in the same newsroom will be from their older colleagues in terms of their computing skills— in the near future, if not already. A severe "haves" and "have-nots" dichotomy in terms of computing skills has begun to emerge in newsrooms. Robert Moore, assignments editor for the mid-sized *El Paso Times*, said learning new ways to use computers is critical in the hiring process today. "*Any* computer skills would be helpful. Since we hire primarily young reporters, any previous work with spreadsheets, databases, and so forth could be decisive in the hiring decision," Moore (1997) stated.

Encouragement and training are essential to computer literacy in the newsroom, stated *Buffalo News* Assistant Managing Editor Edward Cuddihy (1997). He explained:

> Toot the horn when a successful story runs that could not have run without CAR. Let people know that newsroom managers know a good data analysis will take a lot more time than writing canned data. Let them know that we don't need to analyze everything. But let them see how good the results can be when done correctly. Let them know that newsroom managers know and care. To do this, many newsroom managers that tend to be

> the more experienced, thus older, need to be better trained in what can be done. It shouldn't always be the young reporter begging for the time to do a tough, thorough job with a mass of data. Train as many reporters who can stand it in whatever applications you can get them to learn. Today's reporters are busy people in and out of the office. The best CAR people are those who work with new applications on their own, for their own purposes in many cases, but even if the training only gets a reporter to use the Internet and she didn't before, the training was worthwhile. There is no magic to training. Some training can be done in small groups in house with an outside trainer working with a CAR specialist. Some training is specialized and needs to be accomplished outside. Some training is so general it's better accomplished with a local college or junior college. And finally, get your best people to a conference a year just to continue the mix of new ideas.

There are signs that the shift in training and education priorities is occurring in newsrooms, too, as newer generations of PC-based systems are installed to replace single-purpose front-end editorial systems. But the process is painfully slow, especially at smaller newspapers with little or no in-house training. Some news organizations conduct in-house training after a core of knowledgeable CAR staff members develops. Usually, these trainers— who learned their skills somewhere else— conduct classes in the newsroom on a regular basis.

"Facilitate to me means make the Web as handy as possible; make software available, always say 'yes' to a reporter who wonders if we can use a database (and then figure out how). The biggest obstacle in many newsrooms is the proprietary computer system that is great for producing a newspaper but often doesn't do the trick for CAR," said *Buffalo News'* Cuddihy (1997). "If that's an obstacle, try to get proprietary text editing software running on a PC at least for reporters. The PC or CAR center in the newsroom served its purpose a few years ago, but now it is a hindrance to those who know how to use a PC for more than word processing. The sooner all reporters have at-their-desk access to the Web, and sophisticated applications off a file server, the sooner a general acceptance of CAR reporting principles will occur."

If CAR training is not available internally, some reporters and editors try to find it elsewhere— either on their own initiative or with newsroom and company support. Some training is occurring in special credit-earning journalism school, business school, and computer and information science department classes or through training seminars of national professional associations and organizations. Some of the degree-granting national programs with high visibility are located at the University of Missouri, Syracuse University, and Columbia University. Investigative Reporters and Editors, the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting, and the Poynter Institute offer short-term continuing-education type programs.

NICAR and IRE have offered week-long training programs for small, but highly motivated, groups of reporters and editors— commonly called "boot camps"— in Columbia, Mo. IRE and NICAR, for example, have offered training at recent conferences devoted to CAR. NICAR initiated a traveling national training program in 1994 that moves from region to region instead of requiring participants to go to the program site. A full-time training director has made this traveling curriculum possible.

Richard O'Reilly (1997; 1998), director of computer analysis for the *Los Angeles Times*, feels there is a real problem with technology in the newsroom. He believes technophobia is a concern, perhaps the most important one, in newsrooms. O'Reilly believes reporters need to know certain fundamentals about their computers, including the basic operating system, a word processor, how to access the in-house database search software, use of the World Wide Web and other online tools, a spreadsheet program, a database program, and terminal emulation software. The University of Miami CAR Research Project determined that CAR skills needs are shifting. Whereas the focus was on learning database skills several years ago, it seems the emphasis has switched to the online world of the Internet. Development of World Wide Web skills was the leading computer skill listed for newsrooms, but mastery of databases and data was a close second. There is still demand for basic skills such use of Windows and a word processor (Garrison, 1998).

APPROACHES FOR DEVELOPING COMPUTER-LITERACY

"Literacy" is normally a word used in the context of reading and writing, reflecting an individual's level of knowledge and general education. It also refers to specific bodies of knowledge such as geography and computers. There are many ways to define and classify literacy of all types and computer literacy is no exception. There are numerous ways to describe and achieve computer literacy. Perhaps the best is to use stages or levels to represent advancements in individual and institutional computer learning. To become computer skilled, journalists must experience each of the three levels of computer literacy. The levels include (a) individuals feeling at ease with a computer, (b) feeling confident with a computer, and (c) liking the computer (Loyd & Gressard, 1986).

Computer literacy may become the highest priority for newsrooms for the remaining years of this decade. In the most successful cases, newsroom management has taken the lead for the entire company. The fact that the news industry does not always use the most advanced communication tools available is puzzling, even though to do so seems obvious. CAR pioneer Elliot Jaspin has led the effort to move computer use in newsrooms beyond word processing. He proposed five guidelines for newsroom managers:

- Make the program broad-based, involving as many reporters and editors in the CAR effort as possible.
- Have clear lines of authority by putting someone in central control of the program's development and day-to-day story development.
- Remember that CAR is still reporting or just ordinary reporting by other means.
- The newsroom needs to remain in control of information such as databases, so do not leave it with information systems or other departments outside the newsroom.
- Match resources to the task, so do not skimp or overspend. Staff adequately and do the same with hardware and software.

. Rose Ciotta, CAR editor for the *Buffalo News*, tries to be proactive about coordinating and advocating CAR at her newspaper. To do that, she regularly talks with section editors on stories in the early stages, sends section editors alerts from Census or other interesting topics, makes selective suggestions about CAR on daily stories, displays stories that involve CAR and data work on a bulletin board, and publishes a CAR newsletter.

"I do missionary work with reporters to get them interested in stories that I know are possible with various data. I have found that stories work best when the reporter really wants to do them. For example, I've peppered the transportation reporter with info from various sources on the stories in FAA data. I also try to do my own stuff. This is often difficult given everything that I am juggling but I still have a byline and do stories when I can. My last one was analysis of campaign contributions for hotly contested sheriff's race. I will soon publish school test score project," Ciotta (1997) stated. "I believe the CAR editor should not only analyze data, it's very important to stay plugged into the community and work sources on trends and happenings. The CAR editor must be careful not to become data isolated. As we know, data gives you a starting point— information that will allow you to ask informed questions. Data is never the end of your reporting."

Mollwitz (1994), 1997-98 chair of the Society of Professional Journalists' New Information Technologies Committee, feels that a moderate level of computer learning is necessary, but not everyone needs to know it all. "It isn't necessary to be anything more than an intermediate level user. If you get right down to it, people who earn college degrees to learn how to program will be able to write any software much better someone without that training," he explained. "With every new software application there's a learning curve. One is always a 'beginner' in some phase of computing, and that concept is hard for many big egos in this business to accept."

Mollwitz does feel that knowledge of the basics of personal computing will take journalists a long way in this computer information age. "Journalists, however, should understand such concepts as bits, bytes, directories, directory trees, executables, terminal emulation, various communications protocols, as well as various media used to store data," Mollwitz (1994) believes. "The natural question, again, is: Why? The answer, once again, is that most of the information with which you will deal was not created by the journalist. That reporter/editor has to know how to access that data with the full understanding that someone will try to find a way to hide what they don't want you uncover even if they give you all of the data file.... [A] greater depth of understanding of how a computer works is needed if one is to 'gather' the information that is needed."

Some computing experts feel leadership is the key to improving computer literacy in organizations. "Unfortunately, feelings of techno-inadequacy in a boss can lead to trouble for a whole company or association. An insecure CEO who feels surpassed in computer literacy may decide not to upgrade an organization's computer system, which leads to staff frustration and puts the company at a competitive disadvantage," concluded conventions and meetings industry magazine writer Ron Donoho (1994, p. 48).

Award winning investigative reporter Elliot Jaspin believes that the rapid growth and increasing sophistication of computing tools will begin to include more and more journalists who, because they lacked levels of computer literacy, were shut out of CAR projects. "[I]t will be far easier to use computers and what computers will be able to do will be far more extensive [in the remaining part of this decade]," said Jaspin (1994, pp. 14-15). "Now that will mean reporters who have been locked out because they didn't understand DOS, or they had trouble remembering all the funny little commands, will be able to simply type on a screen, tell me how many friends of the mayor have gotten contracts, in a natural language type of way." The computer, he continues to explain, will do the rest of the job. "At that point, the only reason a reporter wouldn't do it is sheer laziness."

ACHIEVING COMPUTER LITERACY IN NEWSROOMS

Several individuals (Woods, 1993; Johnson 1993; Wolfe, 1993; Dedman, 1997; LaFleur, 1998; Wolfe & Paul, 1998) have given computer education and training of working journalists a significant amount of thought. But even these leaders in CAR education are not completely in agreement about the best way to approach computer literacy in the newsroom. They do agree on the goal, however. What is it? It is computer literacy for the entire newsroom. Any sort of computer literacy depends on development of a hierarchy of skills that build on one another. CAR is no different. There are different levels of computer literacy required in each newsroom. Not everyone needs to be a newsroom "nerd" type. But everyone needs certain information-gathering skills that employ computers and networks.

To enable computer education in newsrooms, a process model was developed. This model was developed through original research, through computer education on a college campus, through both informal personal discussions and formal interviews with national experts, and through group discussion sessions at national conferences. Five years of computer-assisted reporting research in newsrooms formed the foundation for the model. A series of annual national surveys of computer-assisted reporting tools and techniques since 1994 has provided understanding of the process of adoption that occurs in many newsrooms. In 1997, for instance, the survey determined that knowledge of the World Wide Web, data literacy, knowledge of Windows, and word processing skills were the four main areas of concern. But the research did not determine any sequencing or pattern for learning these skills (Garrison, 1998).

Furthermore, computer-assisted reporting experience in the classroom has contributed a secondary source of knowledge contributing to the model. Classes with undergraduate and graduate students are not ideal since these individuals are substantially different from working professional journalists, but the computer use, manipulation of databases, and online research remains similar. National journalism conferences in the past decade have given a growing amount of attention to computers and computer literacy in the newsroom, going to the extreme of offering classes at the conferences and sessions that focus on training individuals who will conduct training programs in local newsrooms. Organizations that have been leaders in fostering such national debate have been the Investigative Reporters and Editors, National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Special Libraries Association, and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. From these various approaches and experiences, computer literacy for most journalists can be accomplished in by moving through five distinct stages. These stages build on each other in the following model:

STAGE 1— BASIC OPERATIONAL MASTERY

Most newsroom people know how to power-up a personal computer and a printer. Unfortunately for some, this is almost all they know about their desktop computers. Another group, slightly further advanced than the first, uses the word processing software to write or edit. Some of these users feel they know enough. But these technologically innocent individuals just do not know what they do not know. One of the most critical steps toward computer literacy in a newsroom is to learn the basics of operation of the existing hardware and software. This includes mastering the disk operating system, the basics of the operating environment, and a relatively simple application such as a word processor or desk organizer. For PCs and Macintoshes, this includes understanding the main features of Windows and the Macintosh system. The first stage of personal computer mastery should include:

- *Fully understand the user's own PC hardware configuration, its general operation, and its functions*. This includes basic operation of the central processor, the monitor, keyboard, and if necessary, a printer. It includes knowing what hardware features are parts of the set-up, such as RAM, hard-drive size, operating system, and the speeds of the system's CPU, CD-ROM, and modem.

- *Basic on-going maintenance*. This includes cleaning up around the system, the ability to handle minor problems such as monitor/display adjustments (e.g., brightness or contrast), and printer maintenance (e.g., replacing ribbons or cartridges and refilling paper supplies).

- *Develop troubleshooting skills*. This should include some fundamental knowledge about what do to when floppy or hard disk failure occurs, when a system "freezes," or when a program "crashes."

- *Work with a pointing device*. GUIs require some user familiarity with pointing devices. Some journalists who have learned to use computers with DOS systems or have little or no PC experience might find pointing devices, such as a mouse, uncomfortable to use at first. While these are not necessary for basic computer use, more sophisticated programs are often designed to include pointing devices for faster and more convenient use. For example, it might be possible to run Windows or a word processor without a mouse, but it is not nearly as easy or efficient.

- *Learn to install and run existing software*. There are some users who do not know how to change the hardware or software configuration of their personal computer, whether it is part of a newsroom network system or not. To get the most of a newsroom PC, journalists must know how to customize their systems— within newsroom hardware and software policy— for maximum usage and efficiency. The most important function, perhaps, is simply installing and de-installing various software tools. This, of course, includes changing settings of the software to fit individual needs. Many programs, such as ground-floor basics like graphical user interface environments and word processors, have numerous customization options. This stage includes installation of new upgrades of software when acquired.

- *Learn Windows or other appropriate operating system.* This step peels away the mysteries of Windows 95 (or the new Windows 98), Windows NT, the Macintosh OS, or whatever other operating system is in use. Learn how to make the PC do what it needs to do when a "housekeeping" task involving the PC arises.

- *Learn file / hard drive management.* One of the first things a user must learn is how to manipulate the disk operating system and how to manage files. This includes learning how to copy files, how to rename them, how to delete files, how to make backups, how to create new ones within a given application, and how to check for viruses. This should also include hard drive space management and creation of directories and subdirectories for file storage organization.
- *Use the computer for writing and editing.* This is quite basic, but must be part of the first stage. If a journalist is using a computer at all, it is likely to be used for writing and/or copy editing.
- *Use a computer application for more than writing and editing.* At first glance, this might include complete confidence in operation of the word processor used for writing and editing. But it means more. This includes a form of PC competency branching into another software application such as a spreadsheet or a personal information manager. Still other applications will be learned as literacy growth occurs at later stages.
- *Forego paper or "hard copy" dependency.* For many beginners with PCs or other computer systems, there is reluctance to give up hard copy. A perfect example of this is use of hard copy with the word processor, keeping the copy as "insurance" against accidental loss of the file or keeping a personal information manager at the same time a hard-copy organizer is kept. At some point of comfort with personal computing, a user will decide hard copies are no longer needed. At this point, a new stage of computer literacy is emerging.

STAGE 2— ONLINE ACCESS CAPABILITIES

After mastering the basics of PC operation for the newsroom, journalists need to transfer their knowledge to remote reporting and editing situations. Of course, this is becoming easier because portable systems have recently become as fast and powerful as most desktop PC systems and adjustments to portable equipment shortcomings are less important than when first introduced. The second level of this stage is to learn to access and use the newsroom system from a remote location, including the individual desktop system. Remote computing literacy includes:

- *Learn to use the newsroom's telecommunications software package and file transfer protocol.* For any type of remote computer-to-computer communication using telephone lines, users must learn use of a communications package. They should learn how to transfer files from a remote location to the newsroom editing system. This includes learning how to upload and download files from the newsroom computer system and from other services.

- *Learn basics of modem / fax operation and/or PC card settings and operation.* This includes learning to transmitting files and learning the most basic functions of the modem (and how to set it up if the modem is not internal).

- *Learn procedures for connecting remote hardware and software to the newsroom system.* At times, obtaining a connection may not be easy. Part of learning to communicate from remote locations includes the ability to overcome hardware incompatibility (e.g., telephone line wiring and "jack" connections), calling from public telephone locations, and manual dialing when necessary.

- *Learn to use the newsroom's World Wide Web access and the installed Web browser.* This means taking the time to learn the features of Netscape Navigator / Communicator or Microsoft Internet Explorer. This step should be taken as early in this second stage as possible.

There is urgent need to learn minimal levels of use of the most frequently needed newsroom Internet and Intranet services, such as those used for searching and retrieving information.

- *Communicate with sources and with colleagues with E-mail.* At the point when hardware and software used in telecommunications are mastered, so should use of the tools for accessing and transmitting electronic mail, sending and receiving faxes, sending and receiving attached files within the E-mail system, and accessing and communicating within the newsroom memo or internal E-mail system.

- *Conduct online news story research on the Web outside of the newsroom.* Just as staff members should learn to use networked Internet services in the newsroom, they should acquire skills to use the dial-up equivalent of these services when out of the office— such as from bureaus, home, or hotel rooms.

- *Explore and regularly use Newsgroups.* At the same time journalists are developing information retrieval skills for the Web, they should become comfortable with Newsgroups.

- *Develop search skills for the World Wide Web.* When the newsroom gains access to the Internet, journalists learn search strategies for the most efficient use of the World Wide Web and its vast resources.

- *Create an online source network for reporting and editing specialties.* Combining the availability of resources on the World Wide Web, Newsgroups, distribution lists, and commercial online services, journalists should develop a national and international network of online sources according to their reporting and editing specializations. Just as reporters develop newsroom card files, they should learn to use their online reporting power to develop international and national networks of expert sources.

- *Learn to import data from an online source to a data software tool.* For example, many journalists today can locate data on the World Wide Web, such as that found in Census tables, but they do not know how to move the data from the distant server into their own PC for analysis without retyping it.

STAGE 3— INTERMEDIATE PERSONAL COMPUTER SKILLS

The third stage is an intermediate level of computer literacy. This is a stage where journalists are becoming more sophisticated in their use of their computing tools and are beginning to branch out to more specialized applications and advanced tools. This stage includes:

- *Learn to transfer information between applications*. This includes importing and exporting files across applications, and learning how to share information between applications such as a word processor and personal information manager or word processor and spreadsheet.

- *Learn to generate graphics for help in analysis of data for stories*. Many software programs are capable of information-gathering functions, but also information processing functions such as creating graphs. Top-of-the-line word processors and spreadsheets can produce numerous types of tables and graphs.

- *Develop extended knowledge of spreadsheets*. Beyond the basics of entering information and primitive formulas into spreadsheets, users should advance their spreadsheet knowledge to include sorting, parsing, advanced computations, graphing modeling, macro development, data sharing, using multi-dimensional spreadsheets, and importing and exporting files.

- *Use data and information stored on CDs and other media*. Just as online services and remote reporting tools are important, journalists should quickly become comfortable with use of data found on compact discs and with use of the software that is often needed to access the information stored on many CDs. This should include mastery of the basics of operating a CD-ROM drive and other hardware associated with multi-media systems including some minimal familiarity with sound and video. Since there are other storage media available today, it also seems logical to learn about installation and use of these drives.

STAGE 4— DATABASE CREATION AND ANALYSIS SKILLS

The fourth stage of growth is in the areas of advanced database development, advanced statistical analysis, and geographic information systems database analysis. This stage includes these abilities:

- *Learn minimal skills for free-form text database managers*. Reporters and editors must learn the elementary use of unstructured database programs such as askSam.
- *Learn minimal skills for relational database management systems.* This step includes advancing to more sophisticated relational database programs such as Access, FoxPro, Paradox, Approach, and dBase.
- *Analyze databases from other data sources*. Countless databases are available in many different software applications and it is necessary to take files from one format and transfer them into the database programs used in the newsroom. This skill simply involves learning the conversion utility that is part of the database program.
- *Learn to import and export databases.* Because of the wide range of database tools on the market, journalists need to learn how to import data into newsroom database programs and other analysis tools. Similarly, journalists should learn to use the export utilities of the programs on their newsroom computer.
- *Convert a database from a nine-track tape to a PC system.* Since many government agency databases remain on nine-track tape, this remains an essential step toward complete literacy. This step includes loading nine-track tape on PC-based tape drives and learning use of conversion software necessary for moving data to a PC hard drive file.

- *Create and analyze an original database within a newsroom relational database program.* At the same time journalists learn how to import databases, they should be developing skills in creating new databases in these same programs.

- *Master database editing/cleaning techniques.* Once a database is imported or created, it must be edited and cleaned for use. These skills should be developed at this stage of literacy growth.

- *Learn to use database query languages and how to prepare customized database reports.* Journalists at this stage in their computer literacy development need to harness the power of structured query language or query by example features available in most major database programs.

- *Conduct advanced original statistical analysis using spreadsheets and statistical packages.* Parallel to developing database management system skills is basic understanding of data matrix design and use of statistical packages at minimal levels to permit descriptive statistical analysis as well as bivariate and multivariate statistical analysis.

- *Develop skills in using analytical mapping programs.* A third category of database analysis for this stage is acquisition and development of geographic information systems, or database mapping programs. Skills learned in database management software are easily transferred to GIS software for specific applications.

STAGE 5— DEVELOPMENTAL COMPUTER SKILLS

By this point, most newsroom users will feel confident and have a wide range of highly useful computing skills. However, the ultimate stage in literacy includes addition of application development and programming capabilities. This stage includes the following user abilities:

- *Build minimal programming language skills.* A good place to start programming is using macro tools within word processors and spreadsheet programs. To do more, some programs, such as relational database management and geographic information systems, include more powerful programming languages for development of customized applications for databases.
- *Develop new applications for database analysis where they do not exist, using commercial programs for application development.* A major use of programming skills, within database manager and mapping software, for example, is to create new applications for database manipulation. This is particularly helpful when commercially developed applications do not exist. This form of customized programming can be extraordinarily beneficial to newsrooms with particular information gathering and processing needs.
- *Learn HTML or learn to use an HTML authoring program.* Even journalists who do not work with Web sites will benefit from learning to use Web page technology such as HTML authoring programs.
- *Learn BASIC or learn to use a Basic authoring program.* Basic is perhaps the simplest programming language that comes with DOS and Windows systems and is available to almost all computer users. For GUI-oriented individuals and newsrooms, this includes programming tools such as Visual Basic.
- *Learn an advanced compiler programming language.* Perhaps the final stage of computer literacy also includes growth beyond programming languages offered within commercial packages to use of general programming skills in development tools such as C and C++.

CONCLUSIONS: MOVING TOWARD COMPUTER LITERACY

Computer literacy, especially applied to investigative newsgathering, cannot occur overnight. Many newsrooms have personal computer systems. But their usefulness does not often go beyond word processing or the creation of informational graphics. For most news organizations, achievement of newsroom-wide computer literacy at any level is a matter of deciding what is important and what the newsroom needs to accomplish. Prioritization of skills must occur, perhaps even prioritization of departments within the newsroom. These decisions are in the hands of newsroom management but can be influenced from the bottom up. Perhaps the proposals presented in this discussion will be helpful toward achieving computer literacy in newsrooms. Perhaps the stages of the model are out of reach for the average newsroom or individual journalist for now. But they will not be in a few years. Goals such as these, for a large group of individuals of varying computer skills, will probably seem difficult or even impossible with current standards applied. It may take a generation of journalists or longer for some newsrooms to achieve any levels of literacy beyond the first or second stage. It could be accomplished at a faster rate, however, with the right motivation and learning environments.

There will be resistance. As with any work-related innovation, there will be some opposition to the plan. Managers must get the "status quo" types involved. These types of technology-related transformations have occurred in newsrooms in the past. Newsrooms in the 1970s, for example, experienced problems when the first computer systems began to replace manual and electric typewriters with optical scanning systems and first generation front-end systems with video display terminals and dedicated word processing software (Garrison, 1979). But who still uses a typewriter today for anything more than typing addresses on envelopes or for filling out pre-printed forms?

There will be expense. Any venture associated with developing more complete computer literacy among all newsroom newsgatherers can be costly. Advanced computer literacy for an entire newsroom is not cheap. Ask any educator in a public school system trying to educate hundreds of children. The same learning process in a newsroom means new costs in a number of budget categories, but these expenses *can be* anticipated and gradually covered. Education and training programs will be one of the big expenses, if not the largest. There will also be the hidden cost of regularly assigned time lost for training and education programs for many on-the-job newsgatherers. Certainly expansion of hardware and software capabilities, both in-house and remote, will also be costly. Online services, as they increase in use, will be still another expense.

Develop a plan of attack for the transition. One successful way to manage the cost of extensive newsroom computer literacy is planning. A committee approach will involve staff members and managers in a positive manner and may work effectively at several levels. Certainly in an extended literacy program such as being proposed, there are a multiplicity of approaches and perspectives represented in the newsroom to be considered and debated. A group of newsroom managers and staff members is a proven effective method for determining overall long-term goals, short-term objectives, timetables, and budgets.

For success, learning should be applied. Throughout the process of developing newsroom-wide computer literacy, it is essential to remember the applications of it to daily local reporting. How does the computer fit in average assignments, as well as special projects? Computer literacy and computer-assisted reporting must become a part of the general philosophy of daily journalism in the newsroom. Prominent investigative reporters, such as *The New York Times'* Dedman, have argued on numerous occasions that there will be a day in the future when computer-assisted reporting will become ordinary reporting. Technology comes, is learned, and becomes part of the routine in newsrooms. The goal is simple: *Make personal computing part of the routine newsroom newsgathering activity.*

News organizations will undoubtedly undergo remarkable changes in the next decade. The news organization of the mid-21st Century will probably not resemble the news organization of today in very many ways. The technology for mass distribution of information is changing so quickly that forecasts of how and what will be the norms in a decade are outdated by the time they are published. The impact of the World Wide Web has yet to be fully understood as it continues to evolve into a worldwide computer-based communication network. Such electronic systems will bring newspaper and magazine newsrooms to deadline and production situations more like those of the wire services or even broadcast stations. Updating and revising stories and information will be an around-the-clock effort. How reporters get this work done and how their supervisors will process it will also change.

"To sum up, a new dimension has been added to the reporters' bag of tricks," stated *Buffalo News'* Cuddihy (1997). "After the initial bang, we find only a small number taking full advantage. I suspect it will never be general. Just as different reporters are good at different assignments and different types of reporting, I suspect the PC as a reporting tool will be used at every increment along the scale for a long time. I suspect that the newsroom that puts a premium on excellent reporting will have a higher use of CAR techniques. But through it all, we need to remind ourselves that there are as many kinds of reporters (and stories) as there are people and most every kind, except for inaccurate reporters or poor writers, has an appeal to some segment of our readership."

Perhaps a comprehensive national study should be conducted to determine what "tricks"— to use Cuddihy's word— are necessary for newsrooms today. Some studies have been conducted, including those that have been part of the University of Miami's Computer-Assisted Reporting Research Project over the past five years. But the studies available so far are limited— either in scope or in other ways. There is need for a study that looks at current needs and training, but also at the future. The study must include news organizations of all types and sizes as well. With data from such a study, industry leaders and educators can make even better decisions about their training dollars.

Computers have already become an essential part of the newsroom culture. Computers are the best investigative reporting tools of this generation and will be as basic to journalism of the next two or three generations of journalists as telephones have been. This is the threshold of a new world of reporting. The computer has given investigative journalists unparalleled potential for information gathering and dissemination. To not know how to use a personal computer in a newsroom today is equal to the experience of a library visitor who discovers, after picking up a book, that he does not know how to read. Journalists so far have witnessed only the infancy of this new era. It is exciting to think about what can happen next for journalists. Wouldn't it be marvelous to program a personal computer to peek into the future?

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NEWSPAPER SOURCE USE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL BEAT:
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Newspaper Source Use on the Environmental Beat:
A Comparative Case Study

by

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This study examined whether reporters covering vehicle emissions and the Clean Air Act used a diversity of sources. Even though newspapers have broadened their beat systems to include a greater diversity of topics, the inclusion of a greater diversity of sources has not necessarily followed. In this study of six large and prestigious dailies, the traditional bureaucratic types of sources from government and business continued their dominance, but source use varied by newspaper and reporter specialty.

Newspaper Source Use on the Environmental Beat:
A Comparative Case Study

Sources are an integral part of news reporting. The question of what makes the news is often directly related to who has access to journalists. Typically, sources who represent government bureaucracies and corporations have more impact on what becomes news than ordinary citizens.[1]

Research during the 1970s concluded that traditional bureaucratic beats, such as police and city hall, resulted in a narrow range of official sources gaining access to news pages. This limited access caused the press to miss and misunderstand some of the biggest stories of the 1960s and 1970s, such as the women's and environmental movements.[2]

During the 1980s and 1990s, some newspapers expanded their definition of beats to include non-governmental and non-geographic issues and events.[3] The motivation was to be more inclusive of sources and to expand the definition of news. A wider news net would allow more people and organizations to participate in setting the public agenda. However, adding topical beats, such as the environment and science, does not necessarily guarantee that the use of sources will change. It may be that sources on the issue beats are selected with the same standards as applied to older beats.

This study analyzed newspaper coverage of federally mandated motor vehicle emissions standards to examine source use on the environmental beat. The purpose is to determine whether reporters covering this issue beat used more diverse sources than are relied on under a traditional beat system. The study also looked at whether source use on the environmental beat varied among the newspapers studied and among reporter specialties.

Considering the growth of environmental reporting[4] and the importance readers and newspapers place on major environmental stories,[5] research on environmental sources seems both timely and warranted. This is particularly true in the context of past studies that focused little attention on source use in environmental reporting.

Literature Review

Research has connected newspapers' dependence on beat coverage with reporters' lack of diversity in source selection. Beats provide a useful, if narrowly focused, way of systematically checking for newsworthy events and efficiently screening information for news articles.[6]

Beats create a "bureaucratically constructed universe" that defines reporters' exposure to news sources and the meaning and relevance of that exposure.[7] Likewise, use of sources from organizations associated with a reporter's beat makes the sources' organizations seem more legitimate to the audience and often leads to exclusion of less popular ideas from other sources.[8]

Several studies have focused on use of beat sources in distinct areas such as the environment. Media coverage of environmental risks and an environmental disaster showed heavy reliance on government and corporate officials. Environmental activists were used much less frequently.[9]

In contrast, during the old-growth forest/spotted owl conflict in the northwestern United States, the voice of official business and government sources was "somewhat muted" by those directly involved in the issue. Timber industry workers were much more likely to be quoted by the three major television networks. This source preference may have reflected the immediacy of the workers' message -- jeopardy of losing their livelihood.[10]

Research that looked at reporters covering national security issues found evidence of traditional source-choice bias. Bureaucratic sources were used far more often than non-governmental ones who had expertise in national security issues.[11] Even when sources highly knowledgeable about a topic are used, such as a professional in a given field or an individual directly involved in a conflict, methods for source selection are questionable.[12]

General studies on news source use conclude that reporters limit their choice of sources and choose governmental sources over any other. Business sources are used the next most frequently.[13] Aware of this selection process some research has examined the reasons behind it.

For example, reporter experience and time spent working beats have been identified as two factors that affect the use of official government sources.[14] More experience on a beat and as a journalist made reporters less reliant on government sources for story ideas.

Source credibility, accessibility and deadline pressure have been found to have substantial influence on source selection. Ultimately, these concerns can lead journalists to rely heavily on official sources[15] and can result in the assimilation of their values by journalists.[16]

Government and business provide a convenient and regular flow of authoritative information that reporters find efficient compared with more labor-intensive research. Reliance on official sources reduces the need for expensive specialists and extensive research.[17]

Sources with the most access to journalists provide a socially constructed interpretation of newsworthy events or issues that makes journalists' jobs easier by providing an acceptable structure for succeeding stories.[18] These sources exercise social and political power by steering journalists toward one often self-serving way of reporting the story.

However, limited source use becomes problematic when reporters writing environmental stories are faced with experts and official sources who have differing agendas and who offer differing supportive evidence.[19] Limited source use coupled with limited understanding of the issues leaves reporters open to manipulation.[20]

In addition, when news content is heavily laden with official government and corporate statements, documents and statistics, the perspectives of other affiliated sources are slighted. Even more often the viewpoints and concerns of unaffiliated sources -- average consumers -- are largely neglected.[21]

The literature suggests that some environmental reporting has resulted in a more diverse use of sources, but most environmental reporting appears to include source use similar to that found on traditional beats. The following hypotheses are tested to see if source use in coverage of vehicle emissions was consistent with these findings, and if this coverage varied by newspaper, reporters' specialty and origin of the article.

H1: *In covering motor vehicle emissions standards, reporters will use government and business sources more extensively than consumer and environmental sources.*

This is consistent with the bulk of research about source use. Government and business sources have the advantage of being easier to find and to interview than consumers and environmentalists. Government and business sources also have greater political and economic power than individuals and citizen lobby groups.[22]

H2: *Source use in coverage of motor vehicle emissions controls will vary among the six newspapers.*

Some critics of American newspapers have as an implicit, and sometimes explicit assumption, that newspapers are similar in content. Although this monolithic assumption underlies some of the criticisms of traditional newsgathering, it has not always been supported. International news coverage in seven prestige dailies was found to vary from newspaper to newspaper by topic and by country.[23] This study examined whether variation existed among newspapers for coverage of federal regulations to control motor vehicle emissions.

H3: *Source use in coverage of motor vehicle emissions standards will vary by reporter specialty.*

The use of sources might differ because environmental issues, such as pollution controls under the Clean Air Act, are covered by both general assignment reporters and specialty reporters assigned to environmental, science, business and automotive beats. Because of their greater knowledge of the subject, specialty reporters might employ a wider range of sources than general assignment reporters. Specialty reporters also might be more likely to use sources from their specialty areas.

H4: *Source use in coverage of motor vehicle emissions controls will vary by origin (staff, wire, etc.) of story.*

Reporters who work for wire services face different constraints than those faced by newspaper staff writers. The wires serve a variety of newspapers throughout the United States and face multiple daily deadlines. Research into reporting areas other than the environment has found that wire stories differ from staff-written stories in numerous ways.[24]

Method

This study looked at how six major metropolitan dailies used sources in their environmental beat coverage of motor vehicle emissions standards. The newspapers were the nationally distributed *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and the regionally distributed *Atlanta Constitution*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *The Dallas Morning News*. The daily circulation of the papers ranged from 300,000 for the *Atlanta Constitution* to 1.1 million for the *Los Angeles Times*.[25]

The newspapers of national prominence were analyzed because they are considered papers of record that are read by policy makers to identify national trends. The three large regional dailies were included because they represent papers that are read by millions of Americans every day. All these papers have the resources to assign reporters to environmental beats.

The cities covered by the six dailies have some of the worst air pollution problems in the country. The areas experienced unhealthy levels of air quality in 1995 as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency Pollutant Standards Index.[26]

This study examined the vehicle emissions standards of the Clear Air Act of 1968 because the act was the first federal legislation aimed at air pollution control and because many of the issues involving the standards for automobile carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons exhausts remain unsettled. The act has been amended three times.[27] The 1990 amendments state that cities will face reduced federal funds and other penalties if defined air quality standards are not met.

Large amounts of money have been spent on meeting requirements of the act, and many cities have improved their air quality. However, some cities have not yet met standards.[28] During the 1995 and 1996 legislative sessions, Congress modified provisions of the Clean Air Act, but debate continues over issues concerning automobile emissions.

This debate and the impact of its outcome on all elements of society make the vehicle emissions portions of the Clean Air Act a good subject for this study. The public policy resulting from this debate will affect federal regulations, the cost paid by the automobile industry to build cars, the price consumers pay for automobiles, and the quality of air everyone breathes. The role of government and the impact on businesses make the use of these sources easy to justify, but the impact on individual citizens and the environment also justifies the inclusion of consumers and environmental group members as sources in articles.

Because of the agenda setting and information roles played by newspapers, this research starts with the assumption that all four types of sources mentioned above should have access to the public debate through journalism.[29] The actual source use found in articles reflects the access journalists give to these various types of sources.

The news stories, features, and news analyses published in the six newspapers during 1995 that discussed motor vehicle emissions regulations were coded. These articles were located and down loaded from the Nexis data base. Reference was to highway-operable motor vehicles.[30] Items appearing on the editorial and op/ed page were not analyzed. Furthermore, short fillers and digests and stories about air pollution unrelated to motor vehicle emissions were excluded.

The entire story and individual sources were the units of analysis. Coders were instructed to identify sources in every applicable newspaper story. A source was an identifiable person or group that had a statement or information attributed to it.[31] Sources needed to refer specifically to motor vehicle emissions controls to be included.

Intercoder reliability was measured using Pearson's product moment correlation for interval-level data and Scott's pi for nominal-level data. A random selection of 75 stories, taken from the

190 stories analyzed in this study, was based on the formula for choosing probability samples for reliability checks.[32] Two coders coded each story for the reliability check. The Pearson's r extended from .945 to .999, and the Scott's pi ranged from .87 to .96. The reliability was judged to be acceptable for all variables. Reporter specialty or origin of the story was determined by looking at the byline. For example, a byline might include a reporter specialty such as environmental writer or a story origin such as staff writer. Non-staff writers were usually experts or official sources often identified in an author's note at the end of the story. The "not sure" category applied to stories with no byline or no story origin accompanying the byline.

Because this was a census of all stories about motor vehicle emissions standards in the six newspapers, and not a probability sample, tests of statistical significance were not used. The hypothesis was tested and the research questions were answered with contingency tables that report the proportion of sources by type of source and by the three independent variables (newspaper, story origin and reporter specialty).

Results

The six daily newspapers in this study published 190 stories with identifiable sources about motor vehicle emissions standards during 1995. These stories had a mean of 3.5 sources, with a range of zero to 11 sources.

The first hypothesis stated that reporters would use government and business sources more extensively than consumer and environmental sources. This hypothesis was supported. Of all the sources used in the stories, 43% were from government, 39% were from business, 5% were consumers, and 4% were environmentalists. Of the remaining sources, 2% were scientists and 7% were others.

It is impossible to create an objective standard about appropriate source diversity in covering topics of public interest, but obvious limited selection is practiced when government and business sources are used four and a half times more often than all other sources combined. Consumers and environmentalists made up only 9% of the sources. This pattern is consistent with source use on traditional beats, and it indicates that business and government sources had the greatest opportunity to affect public policy on regulation of motor vehicle emissions.

Hypothesis 2 stated that source use would vary among newspapers in the study. On the basis of data in Table 1, the hypothesis is supported. Most apparent was the variation in source distribution between government and business.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The Washington Post used the most non-bureaucratic sources: 15% were consumers and 5% were environmentalists. *The New York Times* ranked second with 8% of the sources in its motor vehicle emissions stories coming from environmental groups and 6% from consumers. These two dailies also were fairly balanced in their distribution of government and business sources.

The *Los Angeles Times* balanced its use of government and business sources, but only 8% of the sources were consumers or environmentalists. *The Dallas Morning News* was heavily dependent on government sources. Seventy percent were from government compared to only 24% from business.

The *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Chicago Tribune* more often relied on business sources than government sources in their coverage of motor vehicle emissions controls. The disparity was greater in the *Tribune* where 58% of its sources were from business and 23% were from government. Forty-one percent of the *Constitution's* sources were from business and 34% was from government. A total of 9% of each paper's sources was made up of consumers and environmentalists.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that source use would vary by reporter specialty. The hypothesis was supported. Data in Table 2 indicates that environmental reporters were similar to general assignment reporters in their greater dependence on government sources than on business sources.

Not surprisingly, however, automotive and business reporters used more business sources than government sources. None of the types of reporters relied extensively on consumers or environmentalists.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Of the 190 stories, 122 were written by general assignment reporters. Thirty-five were written by business reporters, 20 by environmental reporters, 10 by automotive reporters and three by science reporters. The vehicle emission standards of the Clean Air Act were not covered extensively in 1995 by specialty reporters. Even at these large metropolitan dailies, general assignment reporters provide most of this coverage.

Environmental reporters were the most reliant on government sources. Fifty-five percent of their sources were from government, 25% were from business, 7% were environmentalists, and 4% were consumers. General assignment reporters developed 52% of their sources from government and 30% from business. Five percent were consumers and 4% were environmentalists.

Business reporters took 70% of their sources from business, 17% from government, and 4% each from consumers and environmentalists. Automotive reporters selected 66% of their sources from business, 18% from government, 12% from environmentalists, and 4% from consumers.

Science reporters differed the most substantially from the other specialties. Forty-eight percent of their sources were from business, 7% were environmentalists, and none were consumers or from government. They depended more on other sources, such as academic researchers. However, science reporters only wrote three stories on motor vehicle emissions standards.

Even though specialty reporters used a higher percentage of environmental sources, the percentage of such sources was only a fraction of the percentage of sources from government and business.

Hypothesis 4 stated that source use would vary by origin of story. This hypothesis also was supported. Table 3 shows that staff-written stories relied more on government than business sources. Wire and non-staff-written stories used more business than government sources. For some reason, wire stories had nearly three times as many business as government sources. Few consumer and environmental sources were used regardless of their origin.

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Conclusions

This case study of six metropolitan dailies' source use in coverage of motor vehicle emissions standards suggests that source selection on the environmental beat is similar to that on traditional beats such as police, fire, education and city hall. Reporters writing on the environment relied heavily on governmental sources and were only a little less dependent on business sources. Only a small fraction of the sources consisted of consumers or environmentalists.

Because this topic involved federal regulation, it might be expected that many sources would be from government. However, this does not explain the emphasis on business sources at the expense of consumer and environmental sources. One could easily argue that regulation of air quality is just as important for consumers and environmental groups as for businesses. Consumers share in the cost of regulation through taxes and higher automobile prices, and air quality affects the health of every citizen.

The minor use of environmentalists is curious because they, as well as businesses, often try to influence the media through public relations practices. Content analysis cannot reveal why environmental groups were not represented more in the coverage of federal regulations established to reduce motor vehicle emissions. Perhaps their public relations strategies were ineffective, or perhaps they were judged to be less reliable than more established sources such as government and business. Whatever the reason, their limited access to the news pages likely diminished their contribution to the public dialogue on this issue.

The low degree of use of non-official sources varied among the six newspapers. *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* relied more on environmentalists and consumers than the other four dailies. This finding should be encouraging to environmental groups because the *Times* and the *Post* are among the most respected papers in the country and are read regularly by policy makers in Washington, D.C. But the two newspapers used these non-official sources much less often than official government and corporate sources.

Reporter source use varied by type of reporter. However, their differences applied more to official sources than to non-official ones. Consumers and environmentalists were more likely to appear in stories written by specialty reporters, but this reflected the emphasis given these sources in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* rather than a trend among specialty reporters.

Even though newspapers have broadened their beat systems to include a greater diversity of topics, the inclusion of a greater diversity of sources has not necessarily followed. In this study of six large and prestigious newspapers, the traditional bureaucratic types of sources criticized by some scholars[33] continue their dominance in shaping the news about an important public issue. Among the explanations for this dependence on official sources are their political and economic prominence and accessibility.[34] As previous research indicates, these sources are available on a regular basis and are aware of the deadline needs of reporters. The forces that shaped source use before issue beats were developed appear to continue on beats nominally developed to reduce dependence on governmental and business sources.

If one assumes journalists should find and choose credible sources for environmental stories without giving undue weight to special interests or official sources such as government and business, the coverage of vehicle emissions in 1995 yields little comfort. Suggestions on how to accomplish this include improved education and training of journalists[35] so they may better identify the multiplicity of views surrounding complex environmental issues.[36]

Sources who have expertise but are not affiliated with government or business, such as natural scientists, social scientists and historians, can be found at U.S. universities. These types of sources were used only occasionally in the motor vehicle emissions control stories and were classified as "other." The three stories written by science writers included several such sources.

Using academic sources is consistent with recommendations in a 1991 study of disaster news coverage. Government officials dominated source use and the expert sources were used to provide general information rather than details about the disasters.[37]

Some newspapers are moving away from beat reporting in an effort to improve newsgathering. For instance, the *Portland Oregonian* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* focus on team reporting rather than on traditional beat systems.[38] The intent is to establish a broader base of expertise and to undermine the sense of "fiefdoms" in which a single reporter is solely responsible for identifying newsworthy events and sources. Such an approach has the potential of expanding the choice of journalistic sources for environmental and other stories.

This study's conclusions cannot be generalized beyond the six dailies and this one topic. However, the consistency of results with existing research suggests the findings are not an anomaly, limited only to this topic and these newspapers. Additional research on topical beats, such as racial/ethnic diversity and the women's movement, would verify whether or not source use in newsgathering has become more inclusive since the 1970s.

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[28] Eblen and Eblen, *Encyclopedia of the Environment*. .

[29] There is no assumption about a "correct" distribution of sources among the four types. Criticisms of the traditional bureaucratic based beats are based on the exclusion of sources such as

consumers and environmental groups. Evaluation of vehicle emissions coverage rests on the relative proportion of sources from each group. A ratio of two government/business sources to one consumer/environmental group source is not equal, but would be a higher ratio than the ratios found with previous research into traditional beats.

[30] Stories were identified initially by using the search string "auto or car or truck or motor vehicle and emissions and the date is 1994." Only articles that focused primarily on domestic issues relating to reducing auto emission were selected.

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Table 1

Source Distribution by Newspaper

Newspaper	Government	Business	Consumers	Environmentalists	Scientists	Other	N
New York Times	36%	36%	6%	8%	3%	11%	31
Washington Post	33%	38%	15%	5%	0	9%	20
Los Angeles Times	45%	41%	3%	5%	3%	3%	46
Dallas Morning News	70%	24%	3%	1%	1%	1%	41
Atlanta Constitution	34%	41%	0	9%	0	16%	26
Chicago Tribune	23%	58%	7%	2%	4%	6%	26
Total	43%	39%	5%	4%	2%	7%	190

Table 2

Source Distribution by Reporter Specialty

	Government	Business	Consumers	Environmentalists	Scientists	Other	N
Reporter Specialty							
Environmental	55%	25%	4%	7%	1%	8%	20
Science	0	48%	0	7%	4%	41%	3
Business	17%	70%	4%	4%	2%	3%	35
Automotive	18%	66%	4%	12%	0	0	10
General assignment/ other	52%	30%	5%	4%	2%	7%	122
Total	43%	39%	5%	4%	2%	7%	190

Table 3

Source Distribution by Story Origin

	Government	Business	Consumers	Environmentalists	Scientists	Other	N
Story Origin							
Staff	48%	32%	6%	5%	2%	7%	138
Wire	20%	67%	2%	5%	1%	5%	24
Wire/staff	0	100%	0	0	0	0	2
Non-staff	37%	44%	4%	0	3%	12%	14
Not sure	45%	41%	2%	4%	0	8%	12
Total	43%	39%	5%	4%	2%	7%	190

Historical survey of media coverage of biotechnology in the United States,

1970 to 1996

Paper presented to AEJMC Annual Meeting
8 August 1998
Baltimore, MD

1 July 1998

by

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Historical survey of media coverage of biotechnology in the United States, 1970 to 1996

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Summary (55 words)

This study gathered data on coverage of biotechnology in the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*, 1970-1996. This preliminary report suggests that despite occasional claims that the media have demonized biotechnology, in fact the dominant frames for coverage have presented biotechnology as an element of social progress and as a tool for economic development.

Abstract

Media coverage of biotechnology has played a crucial role in carrying debates about the science, technology, economic, and ethical issues of biotechnology from the halls of academe, business, and government to a broader audience. The basic pattern of such coverage has been characterized as a shift from criticism of "genetic engineering" in the 1970s through a more promotional tone on "biotechnology" in the 1980s, and a more nuanced but nonetheless positive tone in the 1990s. However, systematic data using consistent measurement criteria and rigorous sampling methods have not previously been available. This study gathered such data, looking particularly at the themes covered by articles and the "frames" through which those themes have been viewed. This paper is a preliminary presentation of the data from the study; it suggests that while overall coverage of biotechnology has been steady for much of the last 20 years, the individual themes making up that coverage have varied over time with no overall pattern. The paper also suggests that, despite occasional claims that the media have demonized biotechnology, in fact the dominant frames for coverage have presented biotechnology as an element of social progress and as a tool for economic development.

Historical survey of media coverage of biotechnology in the United States, 1970 to 1996

Biotechnology, if taken broadly to mean the manipulation of biological material for human purposes, can be traced to the earliest experiments with plant and animal breeding, wine- and cheese-making, or the modification of environmental conditions for plants and animals. In current usage, however, it most often refers to the development of techniques since the early 1970s for direct genetic manipulation, whether in animals, plants, or people. It can be applied for medical or agricultural purposes. Medical biotechnology--from improved techniques for early identification of genetic defects to more active gene therapy through to the bioengineering of species that can produce pharmaceutical products--has raised a host of ethical, economic, and technical issues. Similarly, agricultural biotechnology has been seen sometimes as a panacea for the world food shortage and at other times as a source of "alien" species that may produce untold harm to the natural environment (see, for example, Bud, 1993; Durant, 1992; Limoges, Cambrosio, Hoffman, Pronovost & Charron, 1990; Teitelman, 1989).

Scientific, industrial, and government groups have been concerned throughout the development of modern biotechnology about public attitudes toward the new developments (Berg et al., 1974; Watson & Tooze, 1981; Nelkin, 1995; Nelkin & Lindee, 1995). Surveys about public attitudes toward biotechnology have been difficult to interpret because respondents may or may not have had a fundamental grasp of the science involved. But the questions that lay publics have raised also may or may not be answerable by any amount of technical knowledge about how genetic engineering works. For example, much of the attempt on the part of the Monsanto Corporation to win public support for the introduction of bovine somatotropin (bST) through public education was probably misdirected (Hornig, 1994). While Monsanto claimed that opposition was the result of scientific ignorance (largely on the part of fringe political groups) and attempted to combat it with claims that milk produced by cows fed the genetically engineered growth hormone would be "safe" (along with playing on our cultural association of the latest, greatest, and most technical innovations with "progress"), the most effective opposition came from dairy farmers who feared not a deterioration of the milk supply but dire economic consequences. By engaging in an often heated and still not entirely resolved controversy over "safety," Monsanto may have succeeded only in escalating the level of public controversy while alienating its own primary consumer--the dairy business. In contrast, Calgene's introduction of the genetically-engineered "FlavrSavr" tomato went relatively smoothly (Leary, 1994).

Throughout the controversies over biotechnology since the 1970s, the media has played a crucial role in carrying the discussion from the halls of academe, business, and government regulatory hearings to a broader audience. The basic pattern of such coverage has been characterized as a shift from a critical perspective on "genetic engineering" in the 1970s through a more promotional shift towards "biotechnology" in the 1980s, into a somewhat more nuanced but nonetheless still positive coverage in the 1990s (Nelkin, 1995; Goodell, 1980; Goodell, 1986). But the details of this coverage and theoretical analysis of its content have not previously existed. Such an analysis is crucial, both for accurate historical understanding of the media's role in the development of biotechnology and for contemporary policy analysts planning future initiatives in biotechnology-related work.

Analytical Context

Plein (1991) has noted how the biotechnology industry has used media accounts to attempt to "frame" issues related to biotechnology in terms it considers favorable. Media "framing" theory suggests that every media story is presented through a particular "frame" or perspective. By choosing which events and issues to stress, reporters and editors shape the way that the general public understands the world around it. Any one story or groups of stories provides a particular perspective or meaning to an event or issue, with the "frame" excluding other perspectives. As one classic formulation puts it, the press "may not be successful much of the time in telling its readers what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think *about*" (Cohen, 1963). The question of issue "framing" for biotechnology is of special interest to media theorists because biotechnology is new and potentially controversial in several different ways (environmental impact, economic impact, health impact, ethical issues, and so on). The bST controversy, in which bST's developers were speaking one language, consumers another, and farmers yet a third, illustrates this potential. Few media analyses have attempted to deal with the complexity in the possible range of frames that might be applied to a particular set of coverage; the study described here thus contributes directly to the development of more robust media theory, particularly for dealing with complex scientific and technological topics as they appear in the media.

Biotechnology offers another challenge to media theory, because the frames in which stories were presented may have had relatively little impact on the ultimate consumer response to biotechnology (Priest, 1995). "Active audience" concepts in media theory suggest that readers and viewers of information about biotechnology (as for other science- and technology-related developments) interpret media accounts in light of their general trust in scientific institutions and their interest in questions of ethics, regulation, and social impact, as well as their knowledge of the science itself. Such audience "schemas" (Priest, 1994) or pre-existing categories act as strong filters for media messages about science, as well as for information of other types, such as political news. In other words, audiences who believe scientists cannot be trusted or that socioeconomic impact is more important than scientific advancement are unlikely to be swayed by media stories depicting trustworthy scientists or brilliant technical achievements. To command attention, story frames must mesh with the pre-existing audience schemas ; stories must address issues that audiences consider important. Just as audiences convinced that Democrats (or Republicans, or Libertarians, or business people, or university professors) are "bad" are unlikely to be persuaded by any amount of information to the contrary, so audiences already concerned about social impacts of biotechnology are unlikely to be affected by stories about the technical achievements of genetic engineers.

However, acting together, the interaction of media frames and audience schemas are likely to have an impact on the outcome of public controversies. The media and the public are two of the key players in the interactive process that Lang and Lang (1983) call "agenda building," a process through which public controversies develop and play out. For this reason, in order to understand and anticipate public opinion about biotechnology, knowledge of what appears in news stories remains important.

Unfortunately, few systematic surveys of U.S. media content focusing on biotechnology have been carried out. One small-scale study by researchers at Texas A&M University (Priest & Talbert, 1994) suggested that newspaper coverage of biotechnology is heavily dominated by the university and industrial promoters of that technology, with consumers, medical professionals, and agriculturalists quoted relatively rarely. Similar results were found in a study conducted by researchers in the agricultural communication unit at University of California--Davis (Beall &

Hayes, 1996). As the bST case has shown us, and as "active audience" media theories predict, domination of the news by industry sources is unlikely to garner public support for biotechnology. However, the Priest and Talbert study, which deliberately sampled a range of papers in smaller, medium, and large markets, excluded wire service news and covered a limited period of time; the Beall study had similar limitations. The question of what broad coverage of biotechnology and public debates about biotechnology has appeared over the last generation remains unanswered.

One of the most effective ways of illuminating the nature of the agenda-building process in a particular cultural context (that is, in a particular country) is through a cross-cultural analysis. If the issues that rise to the forefront for a particular case such as biotechnology are indeed the produce of the interaction of social institutions (including the media and the public) and are not inherent in the case itself (that is, in this case, not inherent in the science or technology), we would expect these issues to be defined and prioritized in different ways in different cultures. For example, in the summer of 1996, Monsanto's introduction of genetically-altered soya beans in Europe led to dozens and sometimes hundreds of articles in leading European newspapers; the soya issue has, to date, been essentially absent from the U.S. media, despite public statements by a variety of American institutions (ranging from critics of the soya item such as the Foundation for Economic Trends run by biotechnology critic Jeremy Rifkin through "fact sheets" issued by the Institute for Food Technology, an industry organization that represents both food producers and academic researchers). Comparing the American and European coverage can provide insight into the different cultural contexts that shape the agenda-building process.

Method

In 1994, the European Union launched a major cross-national study of biotechnology (Bauer, Durant, and Gaskell, 1998).[1] That project has three elements: (1) measurement of public opinion on biotechnology, (2) analysis of the policy context for biotechnology, and (3) historical analysis of media coverage of biotechnology. Canadian researchers are conducting a parallel project, and individual American researchers have begun preparing studies on the public opinion and policy aspects of biotechnology. However, those studies have not yet been reported and are not further considered in this paper. The study described in this paper pertains only to the media analysis that will eventually allow for the full comparison of the American and EU cases.

As such, this study used the methodology developed and elaborated by the European team in a series of meetings from 1994 onward. The core of the technique is content analysis, a well-established analytical technique for recording the content of large numbers of media stories (Krippendorff, 1980; Holsti, 1969; Stempel & Westley, 1989). The key elements of the methodology include identification of appropriate media outlets to sample, a sampling frame, and a codebook for the content analysis.

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[1] The EU project, called "Biotechnology and the European Public," is led by John Durant, Professor of Public Understanding of Science, Imperial College, and Associate Director for Science Communication, Science Museum, London; and Professor George Gaskell and Dr. Martin Bauer, London School of Economics. Funded by DG12 of the European Commission, it includes teams from 10 of the 15 EU countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom; missing are Belgium, Ireland, Luxemborg, Portugal, and Spain). In addition, closely coordinated studies such as the one described in this proposal are being conducted in Norway, Poland, Switzerland, and Canada.

Media outlets. The EU study has elected to sample a single "national, quality, opinion-leader" daily paper in each country. Unlike the European countries, however, the United States has a decentralized media market with neither a single opinion-leader media outlet, nor a sharp distinction between the "quality" and "tabloid" presses. The most comparable paper is the *New York Times*, which is widely recognized as a newspaper that shapes media coverage for other outlets; it therefore formed the base for the analysis, and is the only newspaper for which data is reported in this study. However, the ongoing project will also be selecting media reports from other papers across the country.

Because of the interest in "opinion leader" publications and the role of weekly publications in many European countries, some of the individual country teams in the EU study have also included a sample of stories drawn from major weekly magazines. For the United States, we are sampling two of the major newsweeklies: *Time* and *Newsweek*. This paper reports data only from *Newsweek*.

Sampling frame. Based on extensive discussions among the participants, the European study defined the historical sampling frame as the time period 1970 to 1996. All stories meeting a specific set of criteria were identified, and then a statistically-appropriate sample drawn from that population. The selection criteria vary slightly by country and language, but generally include any article that mentions:

biotech* [the asterisk indicates truncation; articles containing "biotech," "biotechnology," "biotechnologies," etc. would be retrieved]
clone*, cloning
genetic* engineer*
genetic* manipulat*
gene* technolog*
gene* therap*
recombinant DNA

The sampling frame established by the EU study appears to be appropriate for the American context, and therefore was adopted almost without change. We did make one exception: Terms such as "genome" and "DNA fingerprinting" have been used in the EU study. However, in the United States, those terms were deemed likely to generate a high number of hits that are not relevant to this project (because of articles about the human genome project and about the use of DNA fingerprinting in the O.J. Simpson murder case). Because of resource limitations, we feared that these articles would overwhelm our sampling system. Therefore, we excluded those terms in our first pass through the data, which is reported here. This introduces a significant limitation to the potential comparison with the European data, one which we hope to address in future studies.

Codebook. Again based on extensive discussions, the EU study developed a codebook that measures both relatively objective data (such as length, position in paper, author, and sources used) and subjective issues such as tone, use of metaphors, and story frames. The EU codebook appeared to be appropriate for a U.S. study, and was adopted with only minor changes to ensure maximum comparability between the studies. The code book identified eight clusters of issues:

* Technical issues involving transgenic manipulation (such as plant breeding, gene therapy, and technical aspects of the field tests of genetically-manipulated organisms)

- * Safety issues (including laboratory safety, food safety, and environmental safety)
- * Issues of personal identity (such as genetic fingerprinting, disease diagnosis, and insurance)
- * Political issues (such as patenting, economic impacts, and regulation)
- * Public issues (such as public opinion, education and genetic literacy, and fear)
- * Scientific issues (such as biodiversity, development of vaccines, and general DNA research)

In addition, based on qualitative reading in a sample of articles collected before the full coding proceeded in Europe, the team identified eight "frames" which attempted the capture the overall tone of the coverage:

* Progress	Celebration of new development or breakthrough; direction of history; conflict between progressive ideals and conservative/reactionary ideals
* Economic prospect	Economic potential; prospects for investment and profit; discussions of research and development links
* Ethical	Call for ethical principles; ethical thresholds; ethical boundaries; distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable risks in discussions on known risks; ethical dilemmas
* Pandora's Box	Call for restraint in face of unknown risk; warnings about "opening of flood gates"; unknown risks as anticipated threats; warnings of catastrophe
* Runaway	Fatalism after an innovation; likelihood of future costs having adopted new technologies or products; lack of control after a development
* Nature/nurture	Environmental vs. genetic determination; inheritance issues
* Public accountability	Call for private control, participation, public involvement; regulatory mechanisms; public vs. private interests
* Globalization	Call for global perspective; national competitiveness within global economy; ability to remain isolated within global system

Analysis. Articles were identified via searches in both paper and electronic indexes. After a universe of articles was identified, a sample was drawn of approximately 300 articles in each publication. For the study reported in this paper, those publications were the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*. All articles included in the sample were retrieved either in full-text computerized versions or in photocopies made from microfilm or microfiche. One author coded the *New York Times* (SP) and one author coded the *Newsweek* articles (TA). Frequent discussions during the coding process were held to ensure common understandings of the codebook. An intercoder reliability test conducted at the end of the coding process for the first set of publications yielded 65 percent agreement over all coding decisions; as the overall project continues, we expect to improve the reliability.[3]

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[3] A better procedure would have been to train both coders before the coding process began, including reliability checks on subsets of the overall sample until acceptable reliability had been achieved. Only then would the full coding procedure continue. However, the second coder was not recruited until after coding began, and so the alternate procedure described here was used. We intend to re-do the coder training and recode the articles, along with additional articles from other publications, in the future.

No formal hypotheses were developed at this stage of the project; our goal was primarily descriptive. All data was entered into the statistical package SPSS for generating frequencies, cross-tabulations, and graphics.

Results

Figures 1 and 2 show the overall frequency of articles in the two publications. The *New York Times* showed an early peak in the late 1970s, tied to public debates about the safety and regulatory issues posed by the newly emerging genetic engineering. Both publications showed substantial growth in coverage after 1980, with individual variation in subsequent years but no clear patterns.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Insert Figure 2 about here

To understand the ebb and flow of specific issues in the overall coverage, nearly 40 individual topics were tracked over the entire period. Figures 3 a-f (*New York Times*) and Figures 4 a-f (*Newsweek*) show the frequency of several clusters of themes in the two publications:

- Technical issues involving transgenic manipulation (such as plant breeding, gene therapy, and technical aspects of the field tests of genetically-manipulated organisms)
- Safety issues (including both laboratory safety, food safety, and environmental safety)
- Issues of personal identity (such as genetic fingerprinting, disease diagnosis, and insurance)
- Political issues (such as patenting, economic impacts, and regulation)
- Public issues (such as public opinion, education and genetic literacy, and fear)
- Scientific issues (such as biodiversity, development of vaccines, and general DNA research)

Insert Figures 3 a-f about here

Insert Figures 4 a-f about here

Finally, to understand the overall perspective of the articles, eight "frames" were identified and tracked throughout the period:

* Progress	Celebration of new development or breakthrough; direction of history; conflict between progressive ideals and conservative/reactionary ideals
* Economic prospect	Economic potential; prospects for investment and profit; discussions of research and development links

* Ethical	Call for ethical principles; ethical thresholds; ethical boundaries; distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable risks in discussions on known risks; ethical dilemmas
* Pandora's Box	Call for restraint in face of unknown risk; warnings about "opening of flood gates"; unknown risks as anticipated threats; warnings of catastrophe
* Runaway	Fatalism after an innovation; likelihood of future costs having adopted new technologies or products; lack of control after a development
* Nature/nurture	Environmental vs. genetic determination; inheritance issues
* Public accountability	Call for private control, participation, public involvement; regulatory mechanisms; public vs. private interests
* Globalization	Call for global perspective; national competitiveness within global economy; ability to remain isolated within global system

Figures 5 a-h show the frames that appeared in the two publications.

Insert Figures 5 a-h about here

Discussion

The data presented in this paper provide a general overview of media coverage of biotechnology since 1970. After the initial burst of coverage in the mid-1970s, tied to the discussion of the safety of genetic engineering research, coverage quickly reached a steady state in the 1980s and has remained relatively stable since then. The particular sources used for this study-the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*-show similar patterns; this is to be expected, since both represent New York-based elite media. As noted in the introductory sections of this paper, continuing work on this project, which will look at a broader spectrum of media outlets, may reveal different patterns.

Within the overall steady state, however, different themes have dominated the coverage at different times. The three most common clusters of themes have been the transgenic, scientific, and policy clusters (Figures 6 a-f). The science themes, which provided much of the early impetus for coverage, maintain a steady, though slightly downward, trend throughout the period. Further work will be needed to identify the specific events and developments tied to the peaks and troughs of coverage, but the noticeable issue is the steady presence of science issues in the coverage. On the other hand, more specific technical discussions of transgenic research, while contributing to the coverage throughout the period, have shown much more variation. They show their most substantial levels during the late 1980s, a period when the actual release of genetically-modified organisms and introduction of specific therapeutic products was newest. Finally, the policy themes have had an overall contribution similar to the science themes. But, like the transgenic themes, the policy coverage rises and falls quite a bit; no clear trend or peak appears in the coverage of policy themes. Thus, like the science themes, more work will be needed to tie coverage of policy issues to specific developments in the history of biotechnology.

Insert Figures 6 a-f about here

Of the less common themes, those dealing with identity are the most sporadic. While the *cognoscenti* are often concerned about how genetic manipulation may shape our identity as humans, the topic has overall not been a major part of the public debate. Safety, on the other hand, has been a much more constant element in the coverage, though by no means prominent. The coverage of safety has not been high, but has nonetheless remained a steady presence in the public debate. Finally, the discussion of the discussion-that is, coverage of public opinion, genetic literacy, and so on-shows a clear rise and fall, reaching its peaks largely in the 1980s. Further investigation will be needed to identify reason for the spike in attention to public issues in 1993.

Exploring the coverage of specific themes tells us only *what* the media were covering. It tells us little about the perspective, tone, or impact of that coverage. The analysis of media frames suggests that, despite occasional claims that the media demonize biotechnology or present it only in terms of its risks to society, in fact the coverage has been overwhelmingly positive. More than 40 percent of the overall set of stories discussed in this paper are in the "progress" frame, indicating that the media presentations show biotechnology as contributing to the positive development of society. Another 22 percent present biotechnology largely in an economic frame; those stories have essentially presupposed that biotechnology is a "good" thing, and are now exploring the economic potential of issues like new vaccines, genetic tests, and so on.

It is true, however, that issues of regulation, ethics, and accountability have contributed in substantial ways to the media coverage. About 11 percent of the overall stories focus on public accountability, 8 percent on ethical issues, and five percent on the "Pandora's Box" set of concerns about biotechnology. Thus one-quarter of the coverage has looked at biotechnology through potentially critical eyes.

Each of these conclusions, of course, is limited by the problems of reliability and sampling reported above.

Moreover, simply identifying the patterns of coverage tells us little without better knowledge of the public opinion and policy contexts within which these stories appeared. For example, in the minds of members of the public, do the 25 percent of stories that have critical perspectives remain more salient than the 65 percent of stories that are essentially positive? To answer this, we will need to tie the results of this study to the public opinion data being gathered by others as part of the overall EU and United States studies of which this is a part. Then, to interpret that public opinion data, we are likely to need to understand more deeply the ways that media frames interact with personal schema. On the policy side, we need to know more about which elements of the pattern of coverage are tied to specific events or policy developments. At this time, we cannot make those connections, because the research program from which this paper emerged has not been completed.

But for now, we can say that media coverage has been varied, complex, and presented from multiple perspectives. Clearly, no simple response can be given to the question, "how has the media presented biotechnology since 1970?"

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Fig. 1: Freqency of NY Times Articles by Year

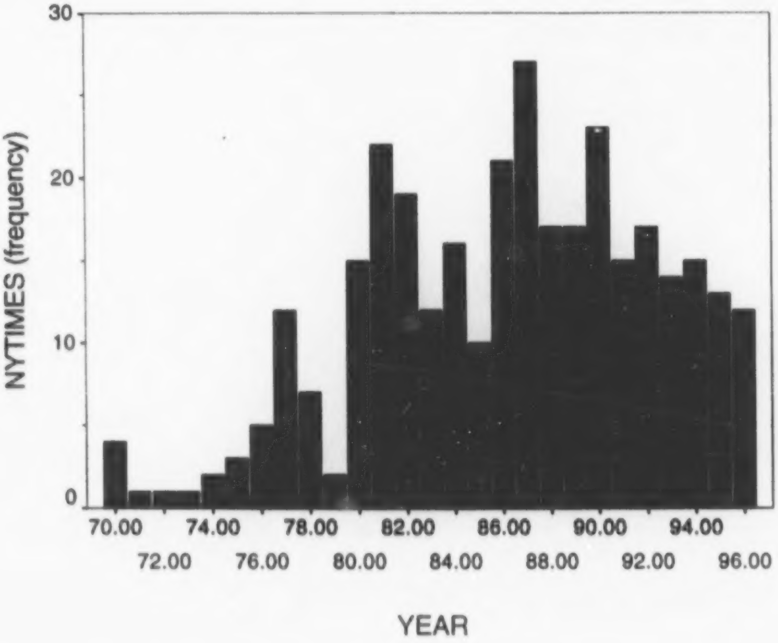


Fig. 2: Frequency of Newsweek Articles by Year

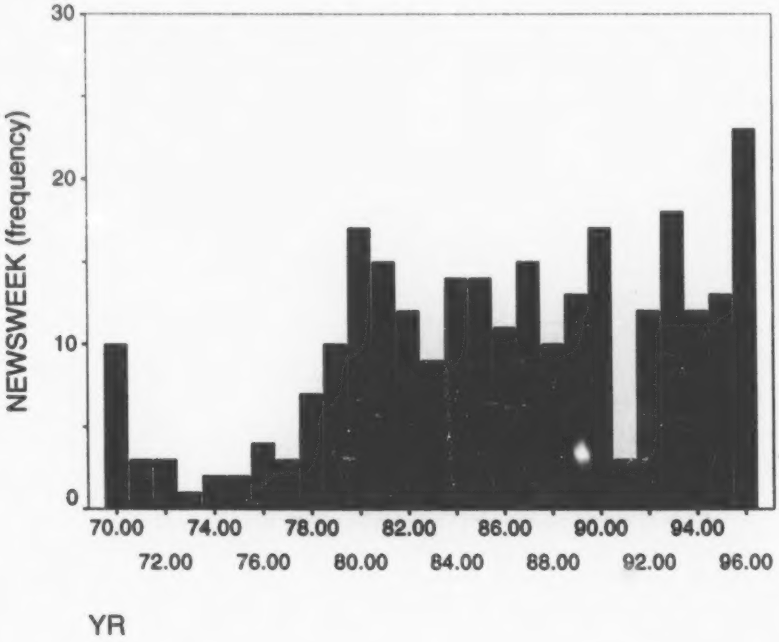


Fig. 3a: Transgenic Issues by Year (NY Times)

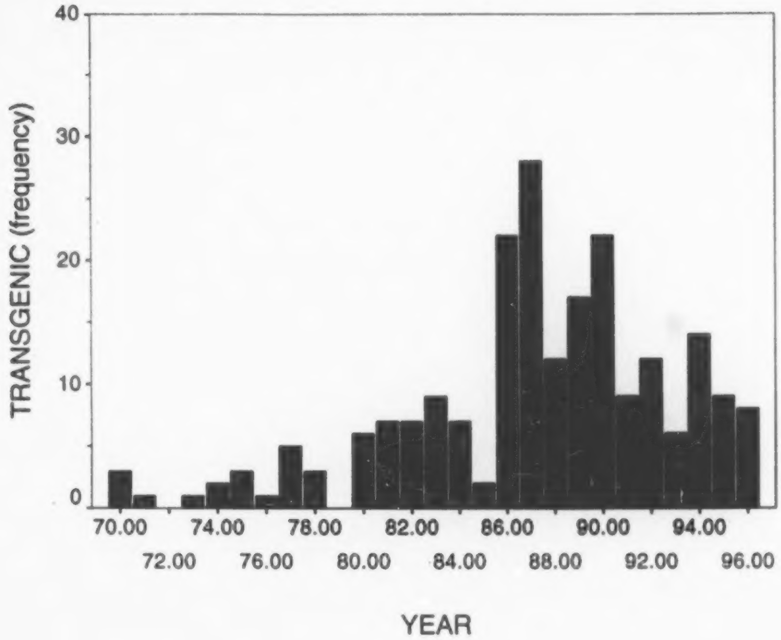


Fig. 3b: Safety Issues by Year (NY Times)

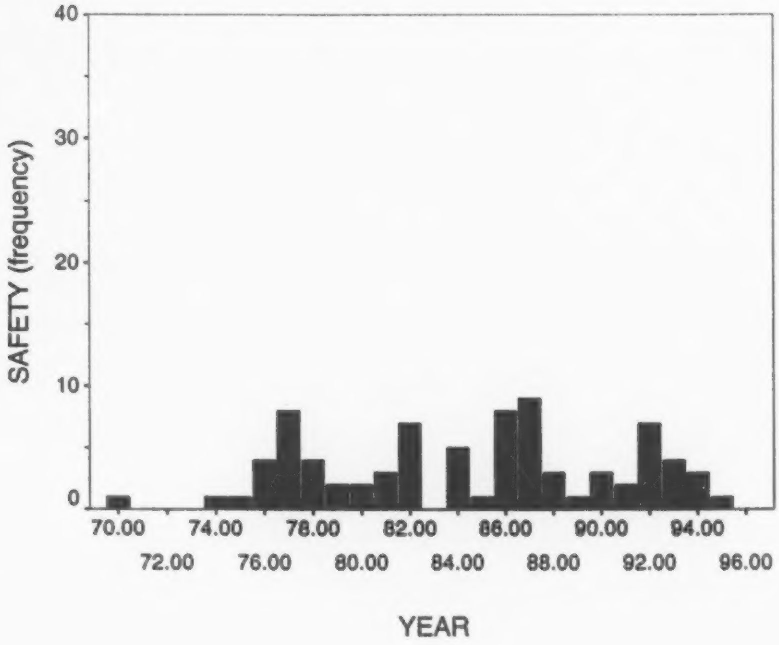


Fig. 3c: Identification Issues by Year (NY Times)

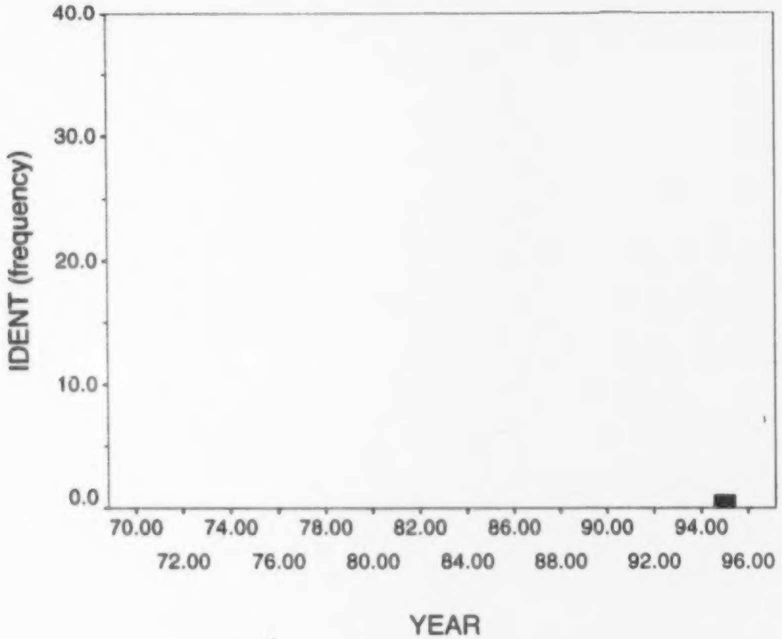


Fig. 3d: Policy and Regulatory Issues by Year (NY Times)

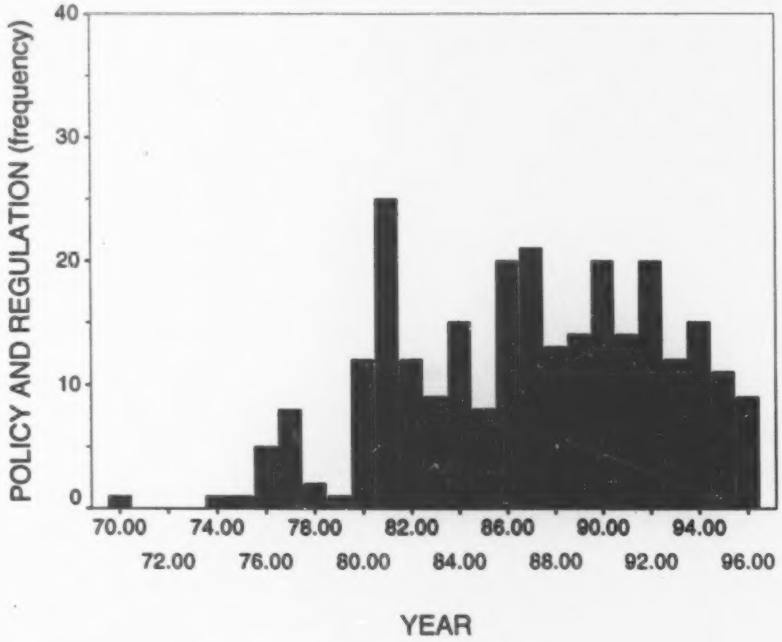


Fig. 3e: Public Issues by Year (NY Times)

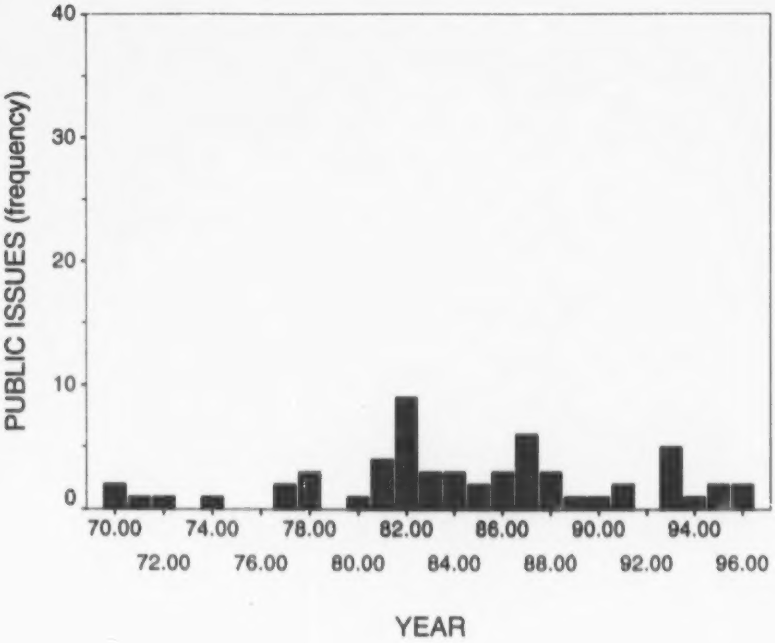


Fig. 3f: Specific Scientific Issues by Year (NY Times)

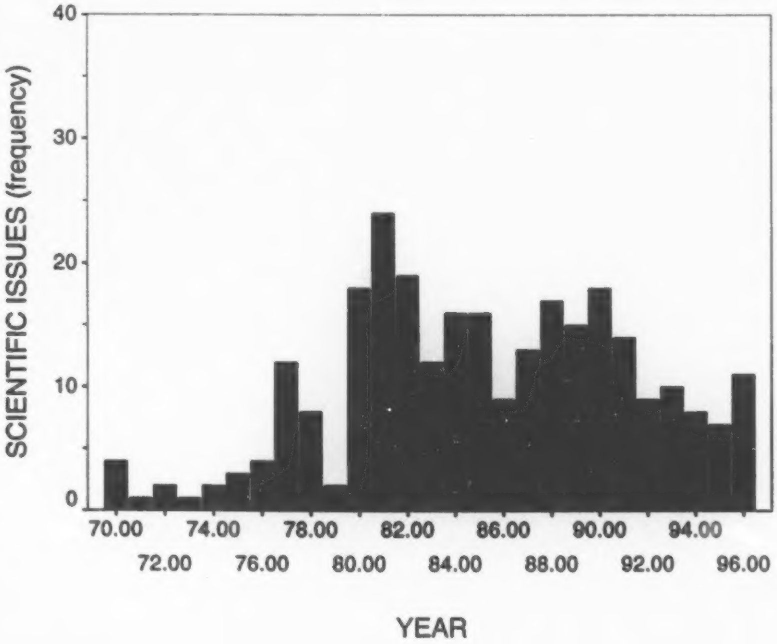


Fig 4a

~~Graph~~: Transgenic Issues by Year (Newsweek)

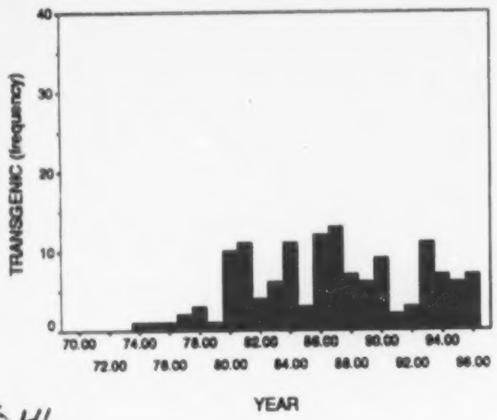
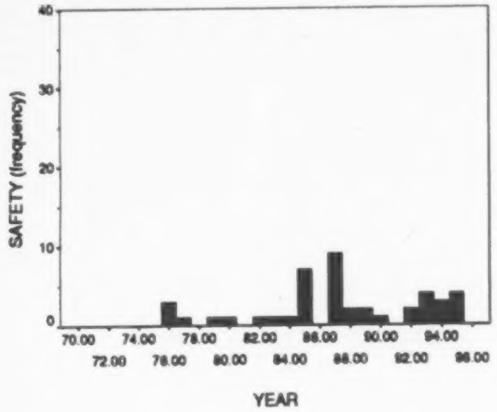


Fig 4b

~~Graph~~: Safety Issues by Year (Newsweek)



~~**Graph: Identification Issues by Year (Newsweek)**~~

Fig 4c: Identification issues (Newsweek)

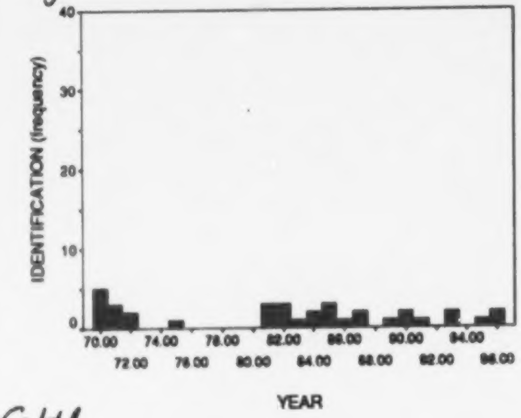
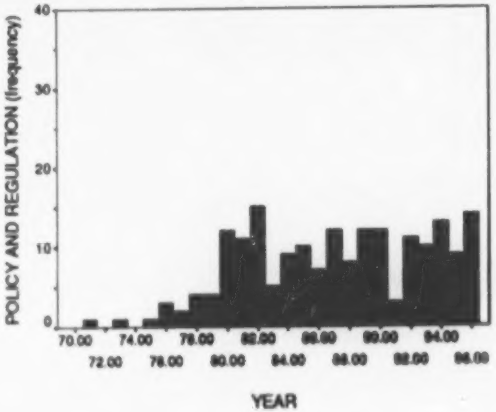


Fig 4d

~~Graph~~: Policy and Regulatory Issues by Year (Newsweek)



~~**Graph: Public Issues by Year (Newsweek)**~~

Fig 4e: Public issues (Newsweek)

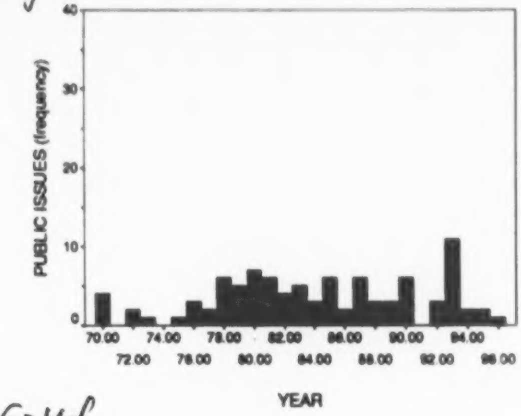


Fig 4f

~~Graph:~~ Specific Scientific Issues by Year (Newsweek)

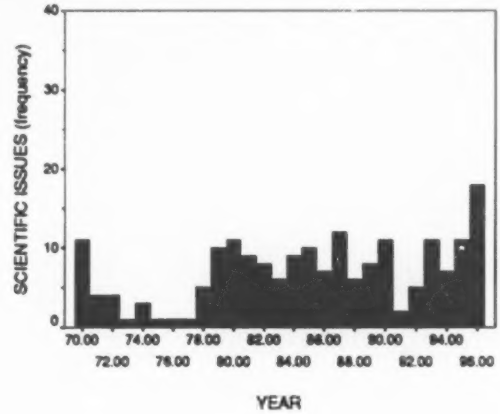


Fig. 5a: Progress Frame by Year

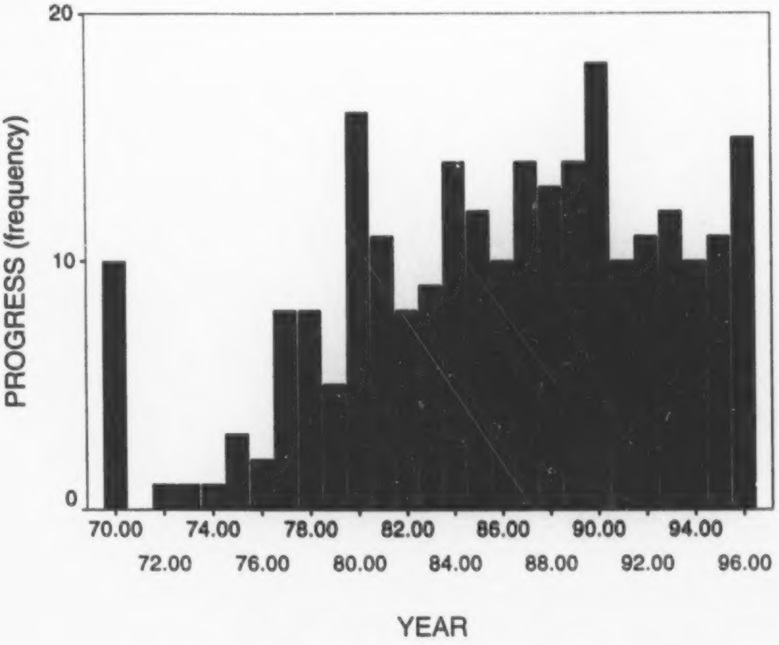


Fig. 5b: Economic Prospect Frame by Year

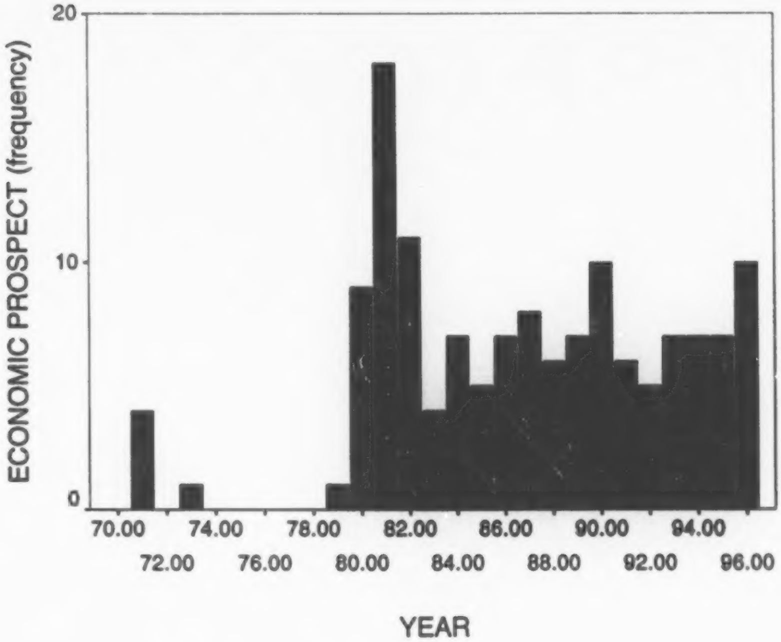


Fig. 5c: Ethical Frame by Year

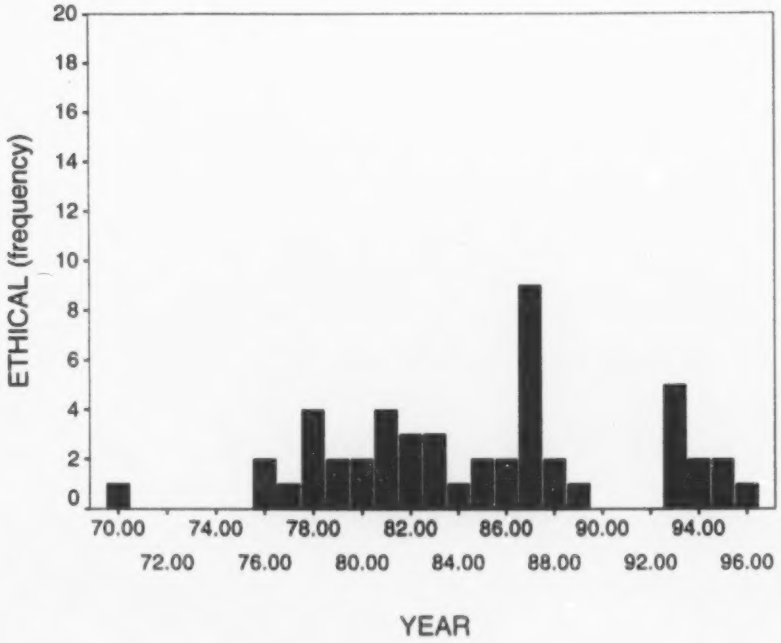


Fig. 5d: Pandora's Box Frame by Year

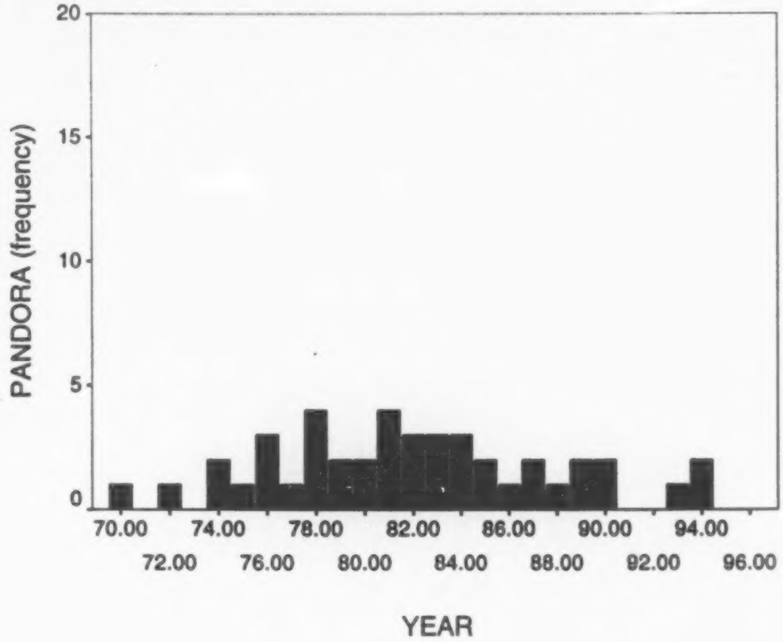


Fig. 5e: Runaway Frame by Year

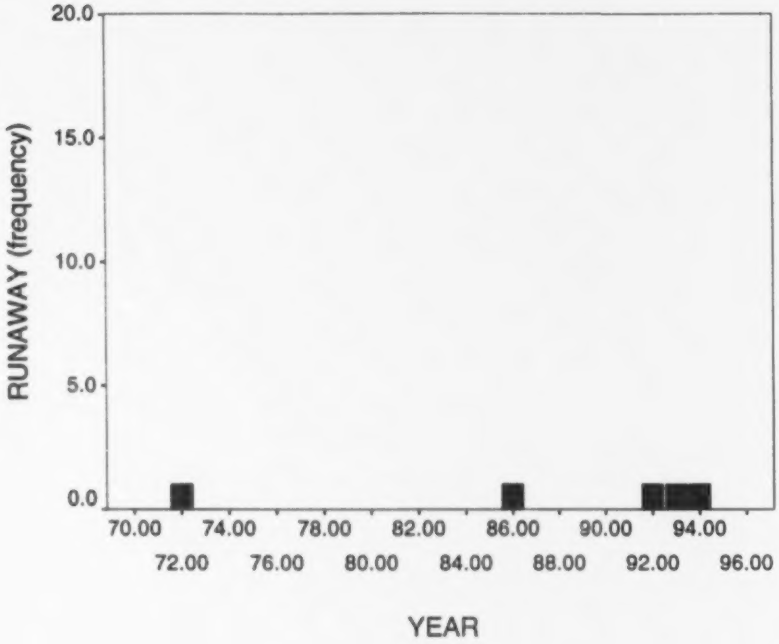


Fig. 5f: Nature/Nurture Frame by Year

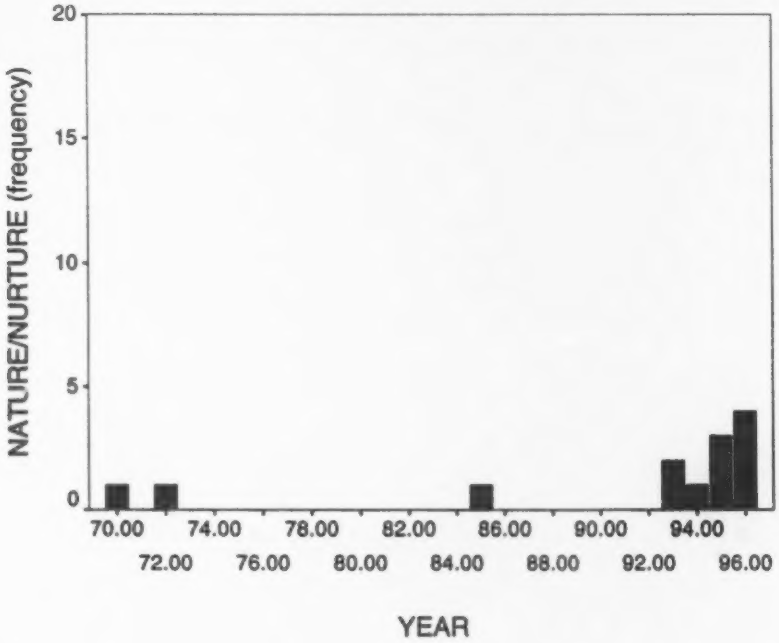


Fig. 5g: Public Accountability Frame by Year

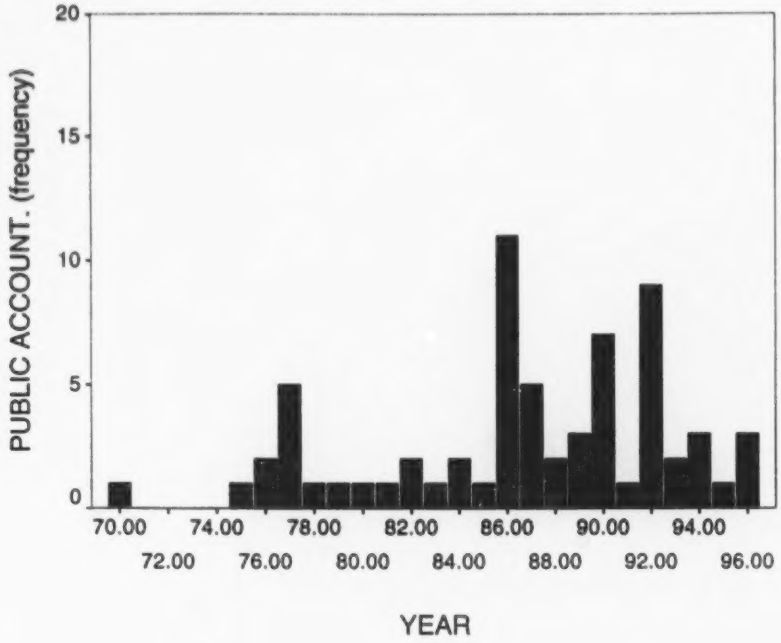


Fig. 5h: Globalisation Frame by Year

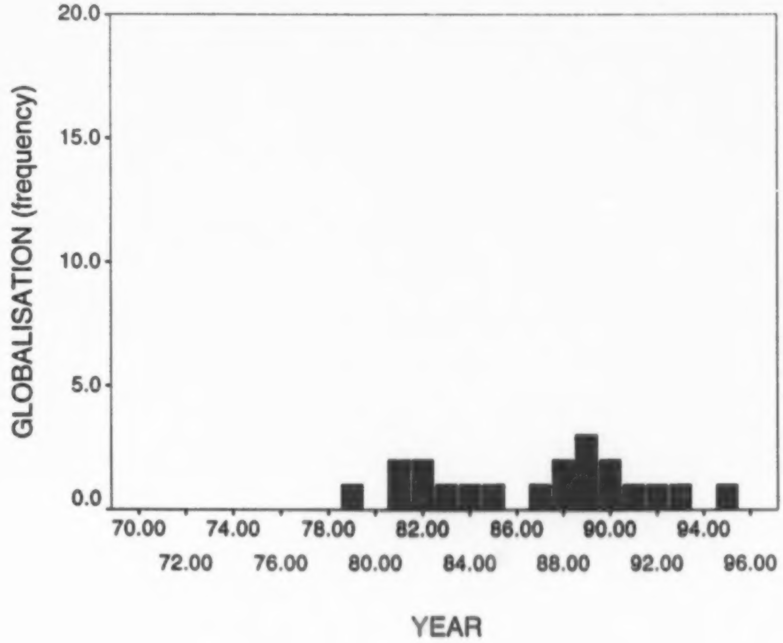


Fig. 6a: Transgenic Issues by Year

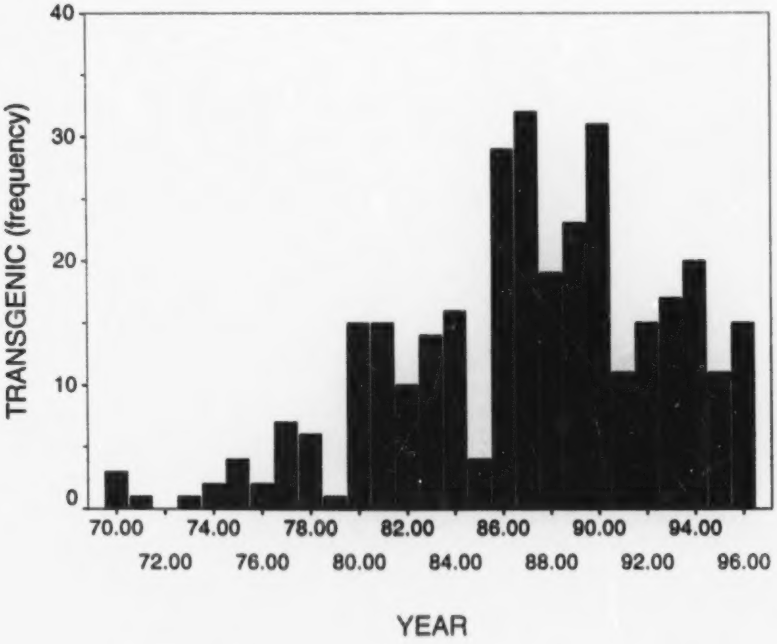


Fig. 6b: Safety Issues by Year

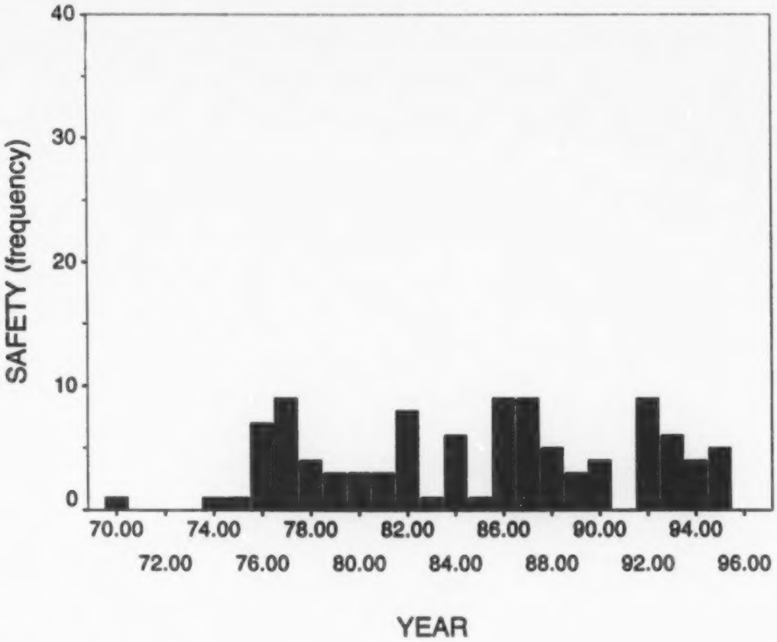


Fig. 6c: Identification Issues by Year

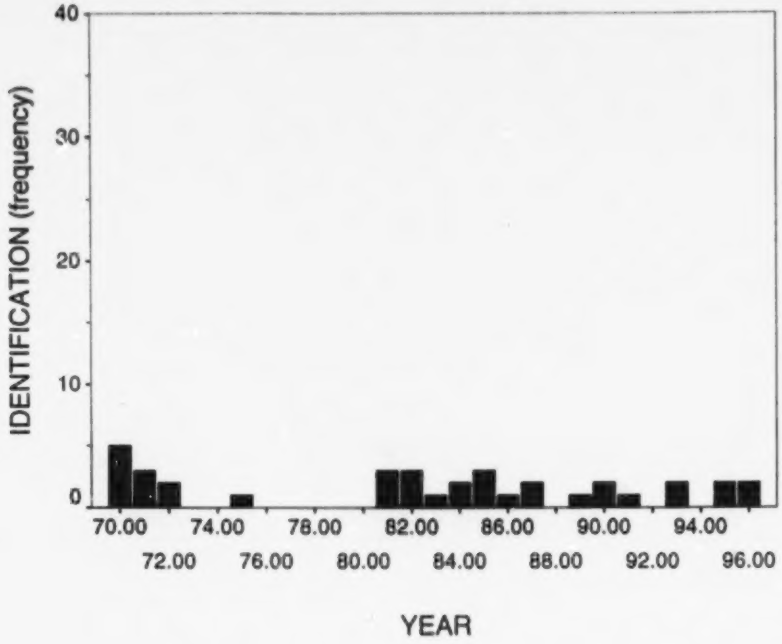


Fig. 6d: Policy and Regulatory Issues by Year

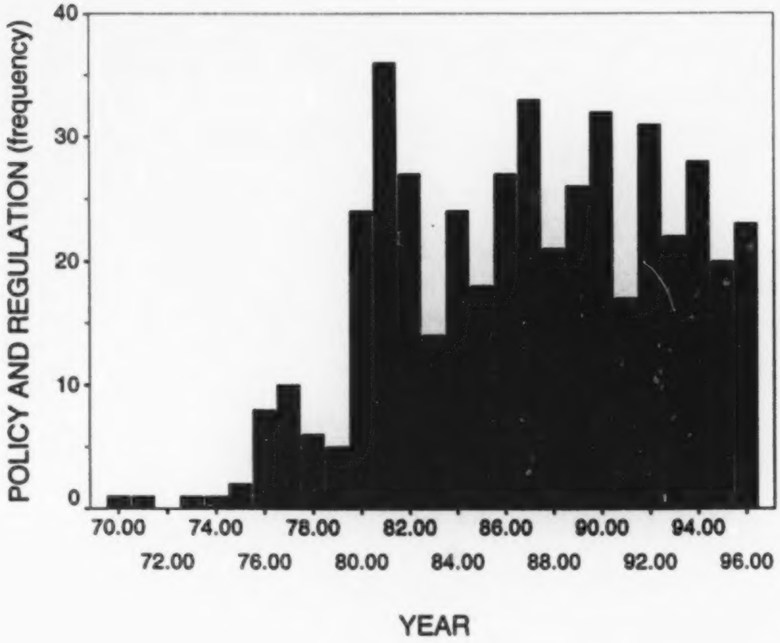


Fig. 6e: Public Issues by Year

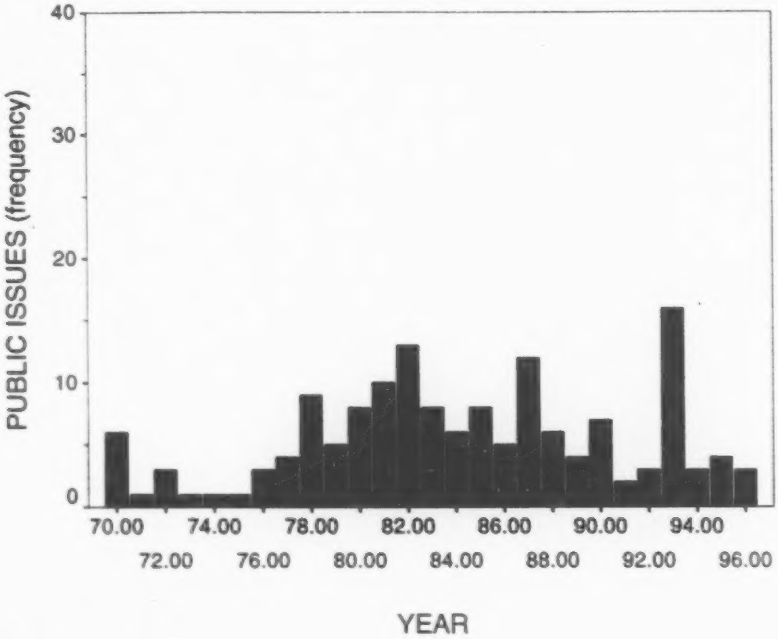
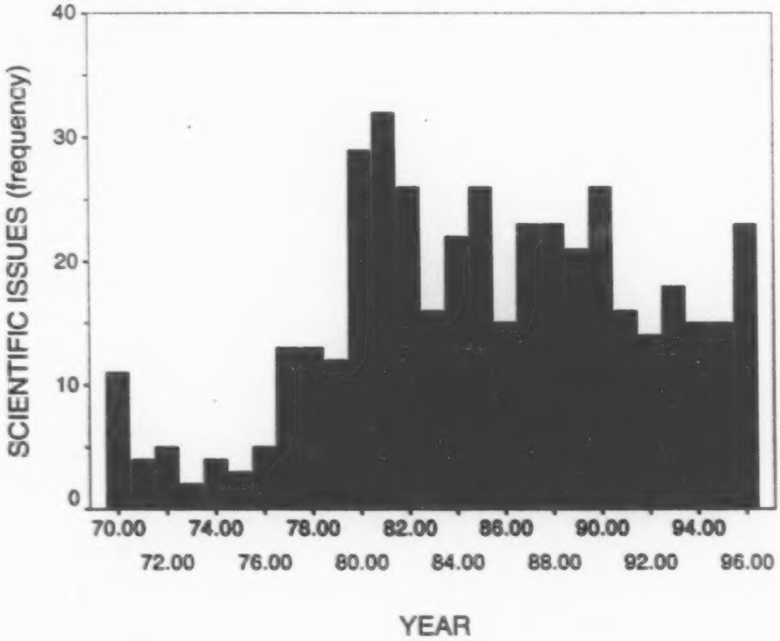


Fig. 6f: Specific Scientific Issues by Year



Biotechnology and the Public
Module 2 - Media analysis - The coding frame
Structure of Coding frame

1 Basic information

V1	country
V2	coder
V3	item number
V4	newspaper name
V5	month
V6	day of month
V7	year
V8	weekday

2 Attention structure

V9	page type. exposition
V10	headline
V11	size of article

3 Contents

V12	newspaper section
V13	news format
V14	author
V15abc	main themes
V16ab	main actors
V17	controversy
V18	location of event
V19	likelihood of benefit
V20ab	type of benefit
V21	likelihood of risk/costs
V22ab	type of costs/risks

4 Judgements and ratings

V23	valuation tone
V24	metaphors
V25	Focus
V26	Frames

London School of Economics, Department of Social Psychology, November 1996

Biotechnology and the European Public
Module 2: Media analysis - longitudinal
Coding frame (version 3.1. November 1996)

1 Basic information

==

V1 Country

Britain	01
France	02
Germany	03
Holland	04
Austria	05
Sweden	06
Spain	07
Greece	08
Denmark	09
Italy	10
Finland	11
Portugal	13
Ireland	14
Luxembourg	15
Switzerland	16
Poland	17
Canada	18
USA	19
Norway	20
Japan	21

check swiss file,
for continuous #

==

V2 Coder [country code + coder]

191 - BUL
192 - SP
193 - TA

Commentary: in some countries several coders may be at work; each coder is identified; use [country code + a running number], e.g. UK coders are '1' for country plus one digit for coders hence 11, 12, 13 etc.

==

V3 Item number [coder number + 3 digits]

10001
1007

Commentary: Each article gets an identification number; to make analysis easier, let us use the country number + ~~three~~ four digits, e.g. Britain is using numbers 10000-19999, France 20000-29999.

==

==

V4 Newspaper name [country code + 1 digit]

191 = NYT
192 = Time
193 = Newsweek

The first two digits indicate the country, e.g. 01 for Britain, the third digit indicates the newspaper

==

V5 Month [2 digits]

Commentary: number the months from Jan=1 to Dec=12

==

V6 Day of month [2 digits]

Commentary: day of the month, 1 through 31

==

V7 Year [2 digits]

Commentary: use a 2-digit number: [73] [85]

==

V8 Weekday

not applicable	0
Monday	1
Tuesday	2
Wednesday	3
Thursday	4
Friday	5
Saturday	6
Sunday	7

Commentary: For a daily newspapers this will vary; for a weekly magazine the day of the week will be a constant.

==

2 Attention structuring

With these variables we are measuring the editorial importance given to articles: which means are used to attract the readers attention

==

V9 Page type / exposition

info not available	0
Front page (absolute)	1
second or third page	2
Front page of folder	3
in the middle	4
back page (absolute)	5
back page of folder	6

Commentary: Some newspapers have several thematic folders with front and back page. Front page can either be the 1st page of the whole paper, or the front of any folder of the paper. The same is true for the back page.

==

V10 Headline content

Commentary: record verbatim as a string variable. It will be interesting to have a list of headlines to compare. In case of several headlines, use the largest.

==

V11 Size of the article missing in computer file

Commentary: What is small or large is obviously relative to the size of the newspaper. Define according to local practice.

paper	1	small
	2	medium
	3	large

==

3 Contents

3.1 Journalistic features

Contents have two aspects: a classification from the point of view of journalistic work; and a classification from the point of view of the event and the issues involved.

==

V12 Newspaper section

Not applicable/not known	0
Front page /general news	1
International news	2
National news	3
Local news	4
other media quotations	5
Debate	6
'Light' page	7
Consumer	8
Editorial page	9
Culture: Feuilleton	10
Business pages	11
Sci&Tech, environment, medicine	12
Letters to the editor	13
Entertainment: tv, radio, film, theatre	14
Sport	15
Lifestyle, health	16
Other	17

Commentary: Some newspapers provide markers to identify the newspaper sections; for other papers it may be more or less adequate.

==

V13 News format

Article with latest news	1
Investigation, reportage, background	2
Interview, mainly	3
Column, commentary (regular)	4
Editorial (paper's editor)	5
Commentary from other people (from outside)	6
Reviews of books, films etc.	7
Other	

Commentary: Here we are attempting a distinction between facts, opinion, and interview; this may not apply equally well in all countries; traditions of journalistic classifications may differ.

3.2 Authorship

V14 Author

wire service text, e.g. Reuters	1
in-house journalist	
political journalist	2
science journalist	3
other journalist	4
sent-in	
other authors: scientists	5
other authors: party politician	6
other authors: special interests	
consumer	7
religious	8
industry, business	9
patient groups	10
environment group	11
agricultural, farming	12
civil service	13
Labour union	14
regulatory, ethics committee	15
military	16
Judicial, legal voice	17
other special interest	18
general public voice	19
no signature, anonymous, unkown	20
Freelance j.	21

Commentary: the list of authors is more or less the same as the actors [see V16] of biotechnology; each biotech actor is a potential author of media material.

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3.3 Biotechnology Events

==

V15abc Main Theme of story [three codings]

Transgenic			
	microorganisms		1
	plants breeding		2
	animal breeding		3
	humans (general)		4
		Human Genome research	5
		gene therapy	6
		Xenotransplanations	7
	GMO release. e.g. field tests of plants		8
Safety / risks			— 37 - general
	laboratory. workers		9
	environment		10
	public. local community		11
	food		12
Identification			
	genetic 'finger printing' for crime		13
	genetic 'finger printing' for other purposes		14
	diagnosis. testing. predictive medicine		15
	screening of large populations		16
	insurance issues		17
	privacy. protection of genetic information		18
other issues			
	patenting. property rights		19
	economic prospects. opportunities - biz stories		20
	pharmaceuticals. vaccines		21
	reproduction. child bearing: e.g. in-vitro fertilization		22
	DNA research (unspecific)		23
	Public opinion on genetics, biotech		24
	biodiversity - organizational level		25
	legal regulation (gov't)		26
	voluntary regulations (Asilomar, NSF, etc.)		27
	science policy for biotechnology, genetics {		28
	education, genetic literacy		29
	human inheritance		30
	Eugenics		31
	military, defense issues		32
	ethical issues		33
	Other ~~(incl. labeling)~~		34
	Labeling		35

Commentary: Most articles will cover several themes. We code max three themes (V15abc)

==

Fear	36
Gen'l safety + risk	37

==

V16ab Main reference to actors [two codings per article]

not applicable. unknown	0
~~National~~ actors	
public sector	
parliament	1
government	2
government agencies (other)	
environment	3
health	4
industry	5
agriculture	6
government research institutions	7
universities (scientists)	8
ethics committees	9
hospitals	10
National patent office	11
police	12
military	13
judicial. legal voice	14
Technology Assessment agency	15
the public. public opinion	16
media. published opinion	17
private sector	
political parties	18
religious organisations	19
consumer groups	20
environmental organisations	21
Labour unions	22
agriculture, farming	23
professional organisations: medical, legal etc.	24
scientific organisations	25
Patient groups, lobbies	26
Industry, producers	27
Distributors	28
scientists in private laboratories	29
other	30

Private actors?

^ Transnational

International actors

Developing countries	31
European patent office	32
European Union. E Commission. E Parliament	33
OECD. EFTA/EEU	34
UN organisations	35
Other international organisations	36

Commentary: what type of actor, who is mentioned? We code **two actors**: firstly, code **the main actor**, i.e. the one mentioned first or mentioned in the lead of the article, in V16a; secondly, code one other actor in V16b.

==

37 = other scientific groups

38 = physicians

39 = Private Universities

40 = State govt

41 = local govt

42 = industrial scientist

43 = bioethicist

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3.4 Contexts

= =

V17	Controversy	none	0
	If a controversy, is the report	balanced	1
		imbalance, advocating	2

= =

V18ab Location of event [two codes]

not mentioned	0
national regions	1-20
Location international	
EU	
Austria	21
Belgium	22
Denmark	23
Finland	24
France	25
Germany	26
Greece	27
Italy	28
Ireland	29
Holland	30
Luxenbourg	31
Portugal	32
United Kingdom	33
Spain	34
Sweden	35
Other Europe	36
USA	37
Canada	38
Latin America	39
USSR, Russian Federation area	40
Japan	41
Other East Asia, inclusive of China	42
Other Asia	43

North Africa	44
Sub Saharan Africa	45
South Africa	46
Australia	47
New Zealand	48
Developing world. Third world	49
not identified	50

Commentary: National regions obviously vary; reserved codes are 1-19; we code a maximum of two locations per article

==

Europe	52
Switzerland	51
The World	53

For U.S.

01 = US
02 = Wash DC
03 = New York City
04? ~~04~~ = ~~Northeast~~ East Coast
~~05~~ = ~~Mid Atlantic~~
~~05~~ =05 South
~~06~~ = 06 midwest
~~07~~ = 07 southwest
~~08~~ = 08 west
~~09~~ = 09 Northwest
~~10~~ = 10 other (HI, AL, territories)

3.5 Impacts / outcomes

V19 Benefits, usefulness

not mentioned	0
possible benefit	1
mentioned, and quantified	
unlikely	2
likely	3
very likely	4

V20ab Type of benefits [two codings]

not mentioned	0
economic growth, development	1
'Third World development'	2
health	3
legal	4
social (in)equality	5
moral, ethical	6
environmental, ecological	7
war and peace, military	8
research	9
consumer	10
~~medical?~~	~~11~~
other	20

Commentary: Various benefits may be mentioned; code only one, the main benefit, i.e. the one mentioned first or in the lead of the story.

Agricultural can be economic (1) or consumer (20)

V21 Risks, costs

not mentioned	0
possible risks	1
mentioned, and quantified	
unlikely	2
likely	3
very likely	4

V22ab Type of costs and risks [two codings]

not mentioned	0
economic growth, development	1
'Third World development'	2
health	3
legal	4
social (in)equality	5
moral, ethical	6
environmental, ecological	7
war and peace, military	8
research	9
consumer	10
other	20

Commentary: Various risks/costs may be mentioned; code only one, the main **risk/cost**, i.e. the one mentioned first or in the lead of the story.

---

4 Ratings, judgements

Rationale: In the last section we obtain more judgemental data; valuation ratings may be easy to link with survey data on public opinion.

======================================

V23a negative valuation of biotechnology, genetic developments 0 = no value

[-] critical, some discourse of concern 1

[-----] very critical: discourse of great concern, doom 5

V23b positive valuation of biotechnology, genetic developments 0 = no value

[+] affirmative; discourse of promise 1

[+++++] very enthusiastic, discourse of great promise, progress 5

Commentary: code in any case: tone as set by the author of the article; use rating scale from 1-5 for 'negativity' and 'positivity'.

======================================

==

V24 Metaphors used

no metaphors	0
metaphors used	1

detail metaphor
or
biotech in genl

==

V25 Focus

main biotechnology, genetics focus	1
other story with biotech/genetic reference	2

Comment: There are two types of articles clearly distinct: those with a focus on biotechnology or a genetic issue, and articles with a different focus, where the reference to biotech/genetic appear in passing-by.

V26 Frames

1 'Progress': celebration of new development, breakthrough: direction of history; conflict between progressive/conservative-reactionary

2 'Economic prospect': economic potential: prospects for investment and profits: R&D arguments

3 'Ethical': call for ethical principles; thresholds: boundaries; distinctions between acceptable/unacceptable risks in discussions on known risks; dilemmas.

4 'Pandora's Box': call for restraint in the face of the unknown risk; the 'opening of flood gates' warning; unknown risks as anticipated threats: catastrophe warning.

5 'Runaway': fatalism after the innovation: having adopted the new technology/products a price may well have to be paid in the future: no control any more after the event

6 'Nature/nurture': environmental vs genetic determination; inheritance issues

7 'Public accountability': call for public control, participation, public involvement; regulatory mechanisms; private versus public interests

8 'globalisation': call for global perspective; national competitiveness within a global economy; opposite: splendid isoliation

0 = other

Comment: We suggest to use the term 'frame' with the following preliminary definition: A frame is a structure that (a) organises central ideas on an issue, (b) deploys particular symbolic devices and metaphors, and (c) defines a particular controversy within the frame [= an agreement about how to disagree]. A frame's function is to construct meaning, incorporating new events into its interpretative envelope.

We suggest distinguishing 'theme' and 'frame' as figure-ground ambiguity: the frame is ground, the theme is figure. The same theme, e.g. genetic testing, could be presented in different frames, and same frame can accommodate different themes. There may be however statistical associations between themes and frames.

V27- extensive reference or rewrite version of Science, Nature, BMJ, Lancet,
[check for 1996 before doing extensively

Essential & Constructed: Community and Identity in an Online Television Fandom

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Essential & Constructed: Community and Identity in an Online Television Fandom

Introduction

Scholarly interest in computer-mediated communications (CMC) continues to grow with the widespread expansion and use of these technologies. Some scholars point to CMC as the loci for new communities and the site for potential collective action (Rheingold, 1993). Others see CMC as atomizing individuals and promoting artificial sociality (McClellan, 1994). But regardless of the positive or negative view of CMC, much has been written about the nature and social practices of online communities from the Lesbian Cafe to the WELL (see for example Cerulo *et al*, Correll, Gourgey and Smith, and Smith). Within this research the inevitable comparison of "real" life to life in cyberspace emerges as a central concern (e.g. are online communities thin or thick, as Clifford Geertz (1973) describes). The shifting consensus is that online communities can be complex, meaningful and fulfilling to their members.

Rheingold defines virtual communities as "social aggregations that emerge from the [Internet] when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace" (5). Exchanging spacial dimensions in his definition for a biological metaphor, Rheingold envisions communities in cyberspace as life in a petri dish.

> [T]hink of... the Net as the agar medium, and virtual communities, in all their diversity, as the colonies of microorganisms that grow in petri dishes. Each of the small colonies of microorganisms -- the communities on the Net -- is a social experiment that nobody planned but that is happening nevertheless (6).

Communities in cyberspace, Rheingold argues, thrive due to the disappearance of informal public places in our real lives and due to the pioneering spirit of "Netsurfers" who find they can interact with other people in completely novel ways in virtual communities. Further, these online communities and relationships are rich and vital, attractive and "even addictive" (3).

However, there exists another social petri dish full of various placeless communities (in a geographical sense), where public (and private) discussions occur, and which allow members to interact in novel ways. And these communities have also been examined by scholars who have found them either meaningful or trivial. These "social experiments," also organized around existing media predate cyber-communities by two decades or more, originating in the late 1960s. Communities of *Star Trek* fans (the now well-known "Trekkers") are equally rich and vital, attractive and even addictive as the work of Bacon-Smith, Jenkins, Jindra, and Verba demonstrate. And, since the mid- to late-1970s other television-mediated fan communities have colonized portions of the social petri dish and thrived. This work examines one of these television fan communities, *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom -- which originated in the late 1970s but has only just ventured into cyberspace in 1996 -- to explore how a shared community and therefore a shared identity emerges out of material (in this case discursive) fan practices.

Essential & Constructed

Following a brief consideration on methodology, some background information on television zine fans, and a discussion of the theory informing this work, this analysis takes a case study approach to investigate community/identity building within a computer-mediated communicative environment and its significance with regard to the relationship between fandom, community/identity, and technology.

Methodology of a virtual case study

My interest in *Alias Smith and Jones* online fandom is part of a larger project examining television zine fans in general. And while much as been written that assumes that these fans share a community and a common identity, this claim has not been fully demonstrated. This investigation embraces a tradition of qualitative and interpretive research applied to communication phenomena through an examination of cyberspace as a site for the construction of shared cultural practice and identity within a particular television fan community. Specifically, I explore the interactions and meanings evident in the discursive communities formed around *Alias Smith and Jones*[1] online fandom as they engage in the construction of both community and identity through ritualized discursive practices. I believe that the processes that bring about online communities are similar -- althought not identical -- to those which operated in television zine fandom in general when it formed twenty to thirty years ago.

The selection of this particular site is based on two factors. First, television zine fandom is an on-going community, established in the late 1960s. As such, its significant practices and norms are extant and naturalized to members. On the other hand, television zine fandom online is emergent and under negotiation as to how it will look and behave. Second, *Alias Smith and Jones*, the series, was cancelled in 1973. Thus unlike series such as *Star Trek*, which has on-going broadcasts, feature films, and professional appearances by the actors to facilitate the recruitment of new members, *Alias Smith and Jones* relies (for the most part) on the continuous loyalty of fans who became involved with the series when it first aired and who eventually find their way to the existing fan community. The "community" of *Alias Smith and Jones* fans is increasinngly based on individual identity as a fan rather than on any interaction with the original product, the series itself. Two comments from *Alias Smith and Jones* fans who joined the *asj-peteduel-fans* listserve illustrate this point:

> I haven't seen an episode of ASJ since the 70s except I did find the pilot episode on tape at K-Mart, but I hope to acquire a few episodes to rewatch. I'm looking forward to chatting with everyone about the series. (J.T.)
>
> I have been a fan of many things in my life...[B]ut one of the earliest, from its first airing, was Alias Smith and Jones...Years later, [a friend's] introduction, via [another friend], brought *me* back to the show and I am joyful to find it as fresh as it was back then (and that my heart beats *just* as fast...) (I.S.)

Within zine fandom *Alias Smith and Jones* is a small, but intensely loyal community that has existed from the late 1970s. Since October 1996, and the creation of the *Alias Smith and Jones Tribute Page* website, fans of this series who never knew about zine fandom have discovered that community and have become a part of it, as this comment from a new fan from the Netherlands illustrates:

> I started my first acquaintance with Internet a few months ago, with a search for anything about Alias Smith and Jones. I could have chosen any subject but

> no.. the first thing on my mind was ASJ...I thought I was the only fan left...It really feels good to be surrounded by lots of fans. (H.B.)

As a result, the community of *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom is growing and adapting. How that community is being created, and these individuals come to share a common identity as *Alias Smith and Jones* fans is what I hope to illustrate here.

This analysis of the textual exchanges within online *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom stems from my observations of and participation in two online communities -- the *asj-peteduel-fans* listserve, a private list for fans, and the *Alias Smith and Jones Tribute Page*, a public World Wide Web site. I also conducted several virtual interviews with participants at the private site, and met face-to-face with four of the listserve participants at a New Jersey fanzine convention.[2] In addition, I examine documents from *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom, specifically the bi-monthly letterzine *The Outlaw Trail*, and the quarterly newsletter *Duel Memories*, published by the Pete Duel Commemorative Fan Club to compare the community that is forming with that which existed previously.[3] And lastly, as a longtime member of the *Alias Smith and Jones* fan community I can draw on my own observations and experiences in order to see and understand changes that have occurred and continue to occur.[4]

Methodologically, this analysis follows the tradition of ethnography; I was a participant observer on the private listserve, where my academic purpose and goals were relayed to the members. However, I merely "lurked" on the public Webpage. Informed consent was obtained from individuals who were interviewed prior to each exchange. My involvement with all four sites of *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom are on-going and long-term, and this research does not have a point of closure in the foreseeable future. However, the data for this analysis represents several months of participation and observation, as well as hundreds of pages of downloaded comments and exchanges.[5]

Some basic terminology so we're all on the same page...

I use the term *fan* to refer specifically to television zine fans, a subset of media fans. These fans are television viewers who participate in the re-working of televisual texts, producing and/or consuming short stories, novellas, novels, poems, essayistic personal reflections, and/or other narratives based on the characters and the settings established in a television series (and occasionally popular films[6]). These fans include the followers of television series past and present, originating in the United States, Britain, and/or Canada.[7] Clearly many other fan communities exist, ranging from rock 'n roll groupies to avid fantasy baseball players to "trainspotters." And while all fans share some common characteristics, both the dynamics of participation and mode of cultural production differs across fandoms so that television zine fandom is, in some ways, unique -- in their focus on television shows, and in the products produced, fan fiction.[8]

Beginning with the original *Star Trek* television series, which aired from 1966-69, zine fans began to network and organize. By the early- to mid-1970s that networking led to the establishment of a community of television zine fans, or as they call it, *fandom* (Bainbridge: 172-196).[9] Television zine fans interact and disseminate their products within this larger community, thus fandom is both a community of individuals and a marketplace for fan-made products. These products include works of fiction, art, song-tapes[10], keychains, t-shirts, and much more. Further, this community and marketplace is shared by women in Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States -- and as the Internet penetrates zine fandom further fans from other countries will no doubt be added to this list.

Fandom is an active, ongoing, international network built up around shared interests within popular culture. Specific areas of interest are called *universes*. *Star Trek*, *Alias Smith and Jones*, and *Starsky and Hutch* are all fannish universes -- they are also each discrete television series, but the fannish universe includes related information and narrative that was not found in the aired episodes alone.[11] These universes generate fan fiction, the foundation of the television zine fan community.

Fiction, art work, and other narratives are collected by fan editors and distributed in homemade, non-profit magazines called *zines* by the fans. Fiction-based zines are generally printed in runs of 50 to 200 copies, depending on the popularity of the particular universe, and are sold through *adzines* -- zines which list other zine titles for sale as well as those proposed and seeking submissions. Zines are also sold at fan conventions, through ads in other zines, by word of mouth recommendations, and increasingly through on-line ads. The prices for these publications usually range from $15 to $25 dollars, depending on the length, presence of color artwork, reproduction quality, type of binding, and other material factors.

Another popular publication within the zine fan community is the *news-* or *letterzine*, often described as a *news/letterzine*. These non-fiction publications are built up around letters of comment (LOCs) from fans who share an interest in a particular series, character(s), and/or actor(s), thus the name "letter"-zine. The "news" aspect of these publications includes such items as zine reviews, lists of zines available for purchase and/or those seeking submissions that would be of interest to the participants, clippings about the series and/or actors from other media sources (commercial magazines and newspapers), pen-pal listings, and the like -- what Fiske has called "tertiary texts" (1987). News/letterzines are generally much smaller than their fiction counterparts, and are sold through yearly subscriptions.

Participants at all levels of television zine fandom are almost exclusively women.[12] And while fandom's members are largely women, their zines primarily address what John Fiske describes as television's *masculine genres* (or *mulscledramas*) -- the western, action-adventure, science-fiction, cop, detective, or spy programs (198-223). Series Fiske labels as *feminine* (179-197) -- soap operas, dramas, and situation comedies -- do not spark zine fan followings.[13] With very few exceptions the most popular universes among television zine fan readers and writers are those dealing with male buddy pairs and all-male (or mixed-sex) teams where male-male buddy relationships can be postulated alongside other androgynous and/or macho dynamics.[14]

Commercial entertainment is for-profit business and viewers have no significant control over the programs that reach their living rooms every night. However, television zine fans take this pre-selected range of choices and manipulate them in ways that add meaning and pleasure to their lives. These fans re-read and re-write commercial programs into texts that they control. In general, these texts are reconstructed by fans to counter dominant cultural dichotomies surrounding same-sex friendships and mainstream definitions of masculinity. Fans rearticulate the relationships that the series' male protagonists share, while maintaining a high degree of fidelity to other textual elements of the show at the same time.[15] The majority of the series' axioms, including character histories, mannerisms, abilities, preferences, etc. are faithfully reproduced in the fan fiction. Simultaneously, fans expand the universes they are presented with, constructing larger, more complicated universes of their own, worlds where the characters are allowed to act and feel in ways impossible for their television counterparts. Perhaps the best example of this is the *slash* story, which has received the majority of scholarly attention.

Slash is so-named for the "/" device used to identify it within the fan community. Slash stories originated with the original *Star Trek* fan writers, who used the code "KS" to inform readers that a story was a Kirk (K) and Spock (S) buddy tale. When fans began writing stories that postulated a sexual relationship between Kirk and Spock they designated these stories as "K/S" to distinguish them from the "straight" KS buddy stories. Or, as Joanna Russ sums it up: "K/S zines are anthologies of fan-written stories about the relationship between Kirk and Spock... and their premise is that Spock and his Captain are lovers" (80).

Constance Penley (1991) has argued that the construction and manipulation of homoeroticism and homosexuality between male characters provides female fans with a medium for manipulating "the products of mass-produced culture to stage a popular debate around issues of technology, fantasy, and everyday life" (137). Joanna Russ (1985) argues that slash is a challege to patriarchy and dominant formations of masculinity and femininty. Using "tactical maneuvers" (Penley, 139) slash fans remake commerical entertainment "To their own desiring ends" (140).

Television Zine Fandom as Community

There is tremendous scholarly ambiguity concerning the term *community*. In 1955, George Hillery found ninety-four different definitions in the empirical sociological literature on community. And among these ninety-four definitions the only common feature he discovered was that "they all deal with people" (117). Philosophical work on community also reveals a myriad of definitions, but with slightly more common ground. Thomas Bender defines community as "a network of social relations marked by mutuality and emotional bonds," by "shared understandings and a sense of obligation," by "affective and emotional ties rather than by a perception of individual self-interest" (8). Anthony Black argues that a community is "the unit upon which every human being depends for his or her sense of who they are and where they stand in the scheme of things" (87).

For these theorists community is expressly that which we do not notice or question; it is not a matter of shared goals, it is a matter of shared lives. A community is defined by the common characteristics of the membership. There are several versions of this sort of argument. In the ascriptive presentation, our common identity is based upon a primordial bond, a "natural" basis for community. For example, Judy Gragn's exploration of lesbian history ascribes a common identity based on sexual practices and cultural roles across time and cultures. Here identity precedes the community that would recognize it. The identity in question is not one of group identification, but of essence.

However, even many ascriptive theorists recognize that the "natural" basis of community can develop into full community only through social relations that foster a collective consciousness; a recognition of others as like ourselves. "The recognition of others as bound to us and like is crucial" (Phelan, 78) so that self-reflection can facilitate our knowing about others, and observation of others can also tell us about ourselves. Further, this identification requires that we understand ourselves not simply as "like another" but as sharing a common identity, a common membership within a concrete community. Thus Julia Stanley says that a community is "composed of individuals who have many ideas and experiences of our lives that we share" (6).

And within community, common characteristics "stretch out to become identities" (Phelan, 78). Common understandings and practices create not only the knowledge that comes from familiarity, but the knowledge that comes from common identity. We join a community because we "find companionship, support, and commitment to common ideals within that community," and this community is "internally defined by its members on the basis of shared experiences and common interpretations of events" (Stanley, 6-7). This differs from subcultures, which, Stanley argues, are based on external definitions of the identities of the members. A community and the identity of its members, on the other hand, are consciously chosen and fashioned by those members.

Essential & Constructed

Television fans, be they Trekkers or devotees of other series are constituted by the popular media as a marginalized subcultural group with members who should "get a life" as William Shatner (Captain Kirk, *Star Trek*) commanded during his infamous *Saturday Night Live* appearance. On the other hand, the fans also create shared (interpretative) communities that persist over long periods of time without geographical referents or stable hierarchies (Fish, 1980; Lindlof, 1988). Many of these communities are now expanding, homesteading in cyberspace, making themselves more visible and inviting new members to join.

Community exists in common activities performed for communal purposes. "We are still constituted by community, but community does not thereby acquire a prior, separate existence, for community is simultaneously constituted by us" (Phelan, 81). Community is not only constitutive of us; community is performative, material, practical, and doing -- the process of "being-in-common" (Nancy, 152). And in the process of community, identities are created. Persons do not simply "join" communities; they "*become* microcosms of their communities and their communities change with their entrance" (Phelan, 87).

Phelan argues that lesbian communities engage in four major processes that bring about "being-in-common". I find that these process are also mirrored by fan communities both on- and off-line. I discuss each process described by Phelan, then offer an example of the fannish version in order to demonstrate the communal nature of television zine fandom. Once this has been established further research can, and I hope will, investiage the nature and practices of that community.

First, Phelan states, a lesbian community shields lesbians from the hostility to their sexuality. It is a place (in a nongeographical sense) where "it is all right (or even better) to be a lesbian, where being a lesbian is simply not an issue" (87). Fandom provides the same kind of place for members as this comment from a virtual interview illustrates:

> I'm a fan. I mean, that's how I think of myself. But fandom's the only place where I feel at home, normal... myself. When I'm with other fans, or at a con [fan convention], or at the computer emailing or chatting with other fans that's when I feel the most like myself. I don't have to pretend. I can just be myself and no one will care. I can come out of the closet! I can't do that at work, or with my family. But around fan friends or online or at a con it's just normal to be a fan, you know? Thank goodness there are places I can be myself or I'd go nuts! (L.G.)

Second, Phelan states that a lesbian community can be a "beacon" for "lesbians or for those who would become lesbians," by breaking or easing lesbian invisibility (87). Television zine fandom was, until online access became more readily available and affordable, essentially an underground community. New members stumbled upon it by chance, or were introduced to it via existing members, as this comment by another fan illustrates.

> When I was about 35 years old, a series of coincidences involving research on a professional writer's organization led me to discover a fan club, which, in turn, networked me into a "fandom." Prior to that, I never had any clue that there was any such phenomenon as "fandom." I thought I was a voice crying in the wilderness. (C.H.)

However, once zine fandom's presence on the web increased individuals "surfing the net" for information on their favorite series discovered entire communities of like-minded fans. As these exchanges from three different virtual interviews reveals, the web has provided public access to the world of fandom, making it more visible, more accessible.

> Came across something while surfing the Web... I've been a lone fan for many years. (J.P.)
>
> When my husband and I went on-line. I immediately looked for AS&J and found the webpage, much to my delight. I didn't know fandom was out there until then. (L.R.)
>
> After exchanging email with a fan I'd met through TOT [*The Outlaw Trail*], I was invited to join the ASJ email loop. Through the loop & TOT, I learned about the ASJ website. When the loop expanded into a listserve, I stayed on. (P.S.)

Third, Phelan describes lesbian communities as modeling behavior, and as helping members and new entrants interpret their lives. The community shows them "how to be a lesbian and what it means to be one" (88). Fan communities play similar roles in the socialization of new members. Over the last few years there have been on-going debates within the zine fan community concerning the effect of the Internet on this process. Below is an excerpt from a fieldnote made at a fan convention panel entitled: "The Internet: Friend or Foe to Fandom?" (The names of individual participants have been omitted to respect their privacy.)

> The moderator opens the topic to the twenty-three fans present. *A* jumps right in, saying: "The problem is fans are finding us, but they don't know anything about fandom. They don't understand how it works." *B* picks up: "They don't know the rules. They don't know to send a SASE [self addressed stamped envelope] with a request for a flyer, or that you don't borrow people's original characters without asking." The moderator asks if the members present have met new fans online and taken it upon themselves to "teach them the ropes." Many heads nod. *C* replies: "I try, but some of the people online don't want to know. They just want the fiction and that's all." *D* counters, saying: "I found fandom through the Internet, and the people I met explained things to me. They invited me to come here and I did to learn more about fandom. It's been great. I'm learning a lot. It's kind of like being welcomed into a big family." The moderator congratulates *D* on taking the time to learn the rules and the

> jargon, then asks the group what we think fans can do to help bring online people up to speed... (Mountain Media Con, July 17, 1996).

If Phelan is correct, these common, shared norms, rules, behaviors, etc. are all part of the process of creating community, of "being-in-common." These activities are constitutive of the community of fans and of a shared fan identity.

And fourth, Phelan claims that communities may provide the base for political mobilization, "a movement out of the community and into the hegemonic cultural, legal, and/or political systems to challenge the status of lesbians in the larger society" (88). Various scholars have examined fan fiction as a possible challenge to existing popular culture ideologies (see for example Gillilan, Jenkins, Jindra, Penley, and Russ). Each fandom seems to generate its own intersections between the fictional world of the television series and the "real" world. For example, *War of the Worlds* with its Native American protagonist sparked an interest in related issues as this letter of comment to a *War of the Worlds* letterzine demonstrates:

> Until I watched WOW I never really though much about the plight of Native Americans today. Well, I educated myself and I have to say I was appalled! I've joined several organizations and now save cans and the like to recycle for money I donate to the Native American community colleges. I urge you all to do the same, or pick another NA charity. I just wish I could do more. (IT #17)

And a member of the Pete Duel Commemorative Fan Club also reflects on this encroachment of political issues into the fan's life in a letter for the club's newsletter, *Duel Memories*:

> We all react [politically] in different ways [to Duel's death]. Some of us devote ourselves to the protection of the environment and wildlife, as our way of continuing the work Pete did... Woe betide if I so much as thought about dropping litter in the street - I would almost feel Pete gazing reproachfully at

> me, as if to say "No, [name deleted], please find a trash can!" To this day, I cannot drop litter on the ground. (L.R.)

These are not acts of revolution, or movements for great social change, but they are factual, productive, politically charged acts that are meaningful to each participant. And these acts, and others, help define fan identity.

From Community to Identity

Hegemonic practices link elements of the social through *articulation*, which involves "the construction of nodal points which partially fix meaning"; it is "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory experience" (Laclau and Mouffe: 113, 105). Articulation, then, is the construction of self and the world as this and not that. Identity is a key part of articulation; "strategies create identities, not the opposite" (Laclau, 223).[16]

An articulation is produced by/within a *discourse*, a "structured totality" that locates and identifies and hails its members, and in doing so points them towards particular actions and strategies. Discourses are profoundly material, running throughout the "entire material density of the multifarious institutions, rituals, and practices through which a discursive formation is structured" (Laclau and Mouffe, 105, 109). Nancy Fraser suggests in her essay "Struggle over Needs" that communities are formed through the process of articulation; articulation is never simply giving voice, but its performative description; it is the construction of experience and self. We must recognize community as articulated, as practice and achievement rather than a given. What I hope to demonstrate here is the achievement of the fan community and therefore fan identity.

Phelan suggests that we "rethink sexual identities as a process of becoming" (41). Like sexual identities (and other identities), fan identities are always a work in progress. Fan selves are not isolated or removed from society, but exist as "locations/consciousness that position us within them in particular, potentially subversive ways" (Phelan, 41). They are particular discourses. I believe that one way of examining the discourse of fan identity can be found in two basic ideas associated with the phrase "coming out".[17] This phrase suggests, on one hand, that the process of declaring one's fannish status is a revelation, an acknowledgement of a previously hidden truth. Coming out is a process of discovery or admission rather than one of construction or choice.

Henry Jenkins (1996) in a brief essay for *Harper's Magazine* noted the "strong analogy" that "can be drawn between the queer community's politics of sexual preference and the fan community's politics of cultural preference" (23). He notes that: "Like gays, fans often speak of 'coming out' as a fan or being 'closeted' at work" (23). In the panel "Coming Out as a Fan: Do You?"[18] the following exchange took place.

> Fan 1: Yeah, coming out as a fan means that I'm sharing who I really am. And if the person I come out to thinks fans are all freaks and wackos, I'm stuck.
>
> Fan 2: Exactly. It's like I have to hide because all the stereotypes of fans make it sound like we're fanatics, stalkers, idiots. I only tell people I really trust the truth.

Essential & Constructed

Like these women, many fans often interpret their fan identity as who they "really" are. It is the "truth" of their individual selves; their "essence".

> If someone asked me, "who are you," and I told the truth, I'd have to say I was a fan. That's the most important part of me. It's my essence. I'm also a wife, a mom, a nurse, a daughter, a friend, a painter, but I'm a fan at the same time I'm all those other things. (L.M. Personal correspondence with author, April 7, 1993.)

On the other hand, there are other ways to tell the fan identity story. Barbara Ponse describes a "gay trajectory" of identity construction that ranges over five elements and "functions as a biographic norm" among white lesbians (124-133). These five elements include: 1) a subjective sense of being different from heterosexual persons, 2) an understanding of the homosexual or lesbian significance of these feelings; 3) acceptance of a lesbian identity; 4) the search for community; and finally 5) the search for a lesbian sexual and emotional relationship.

Fans have their own "trajectory" stories that follow the same basic path. To illustrate this I have condensed one fan's "origin" story shared in a virtual interview.

> As a kid I always felt different. I felt like I was the only kid in school who was really into TV and TV characters. When I finally found someone else who was a hooked as I was in high school we became best friends....I think it was in my senior year, or maybe my first year in college that [her best friend] and I attended a local *Star Trek* convention. I found zines for sale! It was like a religious epiphany. It was then that I realized that I was a fan. That's why I was different. But I wasn't a Trekkie, either. I loved shows like *Starsky and Hutch* and *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* I started asking the people I met at the con if they knew about zines for other series. That's when I met [another fan]. She told me about *Starsky and Hutch* zines and I pumped her for everything she could tell me. I was going to find these people, no matter what! And I did. It was like I'd finally come home. I met the greatest people, who helped me get caught up with zines, and later with episodes. I met some of my best

> friends there, and we're still close. And [her best friend] and I finally decided to do our own zine.... (T.M.)

Being "really into TV and TV characters" made this fan feel different. When she finally attended a fan convention and discovered fan fiction she realized that she felt different because she was a fan. She readily accepted this identity and it was an "epiphany." Then she set about locating other fans who enjoyed the same series that she did, and when she found them it felt like a homecoming. Finally, within her fan community of choice she made new friends, and eventually moved from being a consumer of fan products to a producer of these products. She accomplished the entire trajectory of fan identity.[19]

Ponse notes that the presence of any of the five elements is sufficient to establish the belief among lesbians that a woman "is lesbian," whether she acknowledges it or not (133). This is what Omi and Winant call the rule of "hypo-descent" in race categorizing (60). In racial theory, hypo-descent is the rule that even a little makes one really one race of another, usually a stigmatized one. The lesbian corollary to this is the belief that even a little lesbian sexual desire makes one really a lesbian. And the fan corollary is the belief that even a little fannish activity makes one really a fan.

> For the longest time I just went to *Star Trek* cons and had a fun weekend. I'd buy zines and read them, allotting myself one story per week until I finished all the zines -- which would be about the time the con would come around again! I didn't really think of myself as a fan. But [a friend] teased me all the time saying that I was just fooling myself. Well, she was right! It was only a couple of years before I was writing and going to more cons and buying stuff, and trying to do music videos. (R.S. Personal correspondence with the author, September 12, 1994.)

Essential & Constructed

The hypo-descent model assumes a fixed reality about one's "true" racial identity, and as noted earlier fans seem to ascribe to this notion as the "coming out" comments and the following statement from a virtual interview illustrates:

> I think I've been a fan since I was four-years-old and pretending to be one of the Monkees. I was writing fan fiction when I was in grade school and role-playing my favorite series with my best friend. But I didn't actually "discover" fandom until 1986. Then I discovered that I wasn't alone. I was a fan and there were lots of other fans out there who did the same things I did, who loved the same series I did, and who were doing the same stuff I was, namely writing fan fiction. I've always been a fan, it's who I am, but now I'm part of a community of fans and that's the best! (G.H.)

However, the second element of Omi and Winants ethnic model is the presence of a culture and a history. "The creation of a history is part of an effort to justify our lives" (Phelan, 63). Difference "is not absolute otherness, a complete absence of relationship or shared attributes" (Young, 98) but exists within a field of discourse that provides the system of relationships of same/other, similar/different. In other words, fans might see themselves as being "essentially" fans, but their identities are also the result of what Ponse describes as "identity work" -- the "processes and procedures engaged in by groups designed to effect change in the meanings of particular identities" (208). In this account the process of "coming out" is at least as much a matter of "becoming" as revealing, as this fan describes.

> I remember when I first discovered fandom. I was so lost! There was all these terms to learn, and so much more. I didn't know what a zine was, an adzine, what a con was, or an APA. Clueless! I was clueless. But there were people who helped me... and a lot of trial and error. I'd say it took me a year before I finally felt like I was part of the community. (K.M. Virtual interview.)

Essential & Constructed

Leaving the closet is not a matter of simple revelation, but a reconfiguration of the self. It is a project rather than an event. Furthermore, "becoming" is a process that always takes place within a community that guides one in the process (Blasius, 655).

I want to turn now to an examination of how these phases of community and identity are constructed in the online fan community of *Alias Smith and Jones* through both revelation and construction. The processes that occur online are echoed in the off-line publications *The Outlaw Trail* and *Duel Memories*, which, along with other publications defined *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom prior to its expansion onto the Internet. In other words, what is happening now online is very similar to what has happened off-line in the past.

Computer-Mediated Communication and the Construction of Fan Community/Identity

The Internet allows fandom to extend into more public realms where new members, unaware of fandom as an existing community, can find that community -- Phelan's "beacon": "If it hadn't been for the finding you guys on the net I never would have know about ASJ fandom, and that would have been tragic! I'm sooo glad I found you!" (A.J.). It also allows for more widespread sharing of information, easing the burden of collecting materials on the series and its stars.

> I can't believe how great everyone has been, sending me articles and videos. What can I say, except WOW! And Thanks! This is just great. I can't believe there is so much out there on ASJ and Pete. I'm in heaven! (C.J.)

Further, it gives fans an opportunity to interact with the community on a more frequent basis, allowing for more fannish activity in the same amount of time.

Essential & Constructed

> The net provided me with easier and greater interaction with fans. I have a finite amount of time to devote to fandom and the net means I spend less time searching for and more time dealing with. (C.R.)

The same kinds of activities occurs online and off in *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom, but online these activities transpire at a faster pace and with more input from a larger number of fans.

The community of *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom and the identity of its participants are created through both a sense of essential belonging -- as expressed through revelation, that is "coming out" as an *Alias Smith and Jones* fan -- and through the shared performances of activities that produce a sense of "being-in-common." I focus here on how the fans create a shared community where they "find companionship, support, and commitment to common ideas" (Stanley, 6-7); what processes bring about their "being-in-common." But before I address these processes, I want to examine the "essential" side of the story.

Most of the women in *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom consider themselves fans in some essential way, which prior comments in this work have illustrated. But the characteristic way that this self-identification occurs online is through the sharing of individual biographies that range from superficial comments, to much more indepth revelations. The use of biography demonstrates that fandom does indeed shield its members from external ridicule. It is all right to be a fan, in fact, one must display their status for peer review.

Features that appear regularly in fan biographies include: the fan's age, where she is from, where she lives now, information on her marital status[20], a description of her job, and a mention of other interests, hobbies or fandoms. I include an example from the *asj-peteduel-fans* listserve in its entirety to illustrate what many of these biographies look like.

> I'm 39, originally from New Jersey and Maryland but now live in Massachusetts. I have no significant other :(and live alone with my cat Claudia.
>
> I fell in love with AS&J and Pete Duel on the first airing of The McCreedy Bust (didn't see the pilot til it was rerun in September), which was shortly after my 13th birthday. I was upset when Pete died, but I had been a fan of Roger Davis when he was on Dark Shadows, so I got used to him as Heyes. I know I'm an anomaly among AS&J fans, but I *like* Roger. Pete is still number one though.
>
> As [another list member] said, we met on the Monkees list, which I belonged to for a while last year, exchanged tapes (she's where I got those full eps of Wrong Train to Brimstone and Reformation of Harry Brisco, which haven't been aired in the US probably since 1971), and she sent me some 'zines and gave me the address of someone who gave me [another list member]'s address, and that's how I got involved with you guys.
>
> I've worked at my alma mater (-- College) ever since I graduated. I've been clerical staff up til now, but in a couple of weeks I'm *gulp!* moving up to administration - just got hired as new assistant registrar. I'm still at the on-no-what-have-I-done? stage, but I'm sure once I get started there it will be fine.
>
> Other interests: I'm a big fan of the Monkees; other favs are Beatles, Jim Croce, Nat King Cole, and Kingston Trio; I sing in my church choir and am very involved with church otherwise; my main hobby is genealogy (researching my family tree). I don't watch a lot of tv anymore; the only things I currently watch regularly are jeopardy, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and Brisco County Jr. Oh yeah, and I've been watching Full Circle with Michael Palin, but that's a short term thing.
>
> I guess that covers the basics. (J.P.)

The disclosure of these shared characteristics, interests, etc. create registers of identity which other members of the community use to compare and recognize themselves, much like Phelan's third phase where the community models behavior and aid members in interpreting their lives. In this case biographies aid all members of the community in identifying aspects of self that will be labeled "fan."

In addition, fans are quick to find examples of similarity and difference in orientation to textual material, such as this fan's comment: "I know I'm an anomaly among AS&J fans, but I *like* Roger," or this fan's response to several posted biographies: "I was struck by how similar we all are!" (C.G.)

An extension to the basic demographic information (age, geographic location, occupation, etc.) is a brief history (in more or less detail) of their historical relationship with *Alias Smith and Jones* -- J.P.'s "I fell in love with AS&J and Pete Duel on the first airing of The McCreedy Bust." Or as this international fan from the Netherlands shares:

> I became a fan on my 13th birthday, almost 20 years ago, when they showed 'How to Rob a Bank in One Hard Lesson' and I was allowed to stay up and watch it. I remember only seeing four or five episodes that time, and I had to wait for 7 years before the series was aired again...6 Years later, a full-time job and tv-cable richer I caught most of the series on the BBC, but it was not until two months ago that I finally saw the last episodes I missed over all that time, when a Dutch oldies tv station reaired all the episodes of the first two seasons except the 'Day the Hanged Kid Curry,' and a dear, dear friend of mine got me that particular episode from who knows where....Since my 13th I have written my own stories about them [the series characters]. (R.H.)

And in addition to their history with the program many fans also include brief histories of their involvement with *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom. This comment is an example:

> I was introduced to AS&J fandom by a woman who was already in the fandom. She told me about the zines and I bought "Just You and Me, Kid" -- POW! I was hooked! From that point I started collecting zines, writing stories, then started going to cons and eventually decided to try my hand at my own AS&J zine. Then came the AS&J letterzines, and now it's AS&J online stuff! What's next? (C.G.)

Essential & Constructed

These biographies do several things: they create a common history of *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom, they create a sense of recognition in members (I recognize these stories as similar to my own), and they acknowledge the "dominant" nature of the fan identity. Fans who viewed the series when it first aired (and later in syndication) became a Fan, and that phenomenologically essential aspect of their identity eventually finds its fullest expression when they find the larger *Alias Smith and Jones* community -- the "voice crying alone in the wilderness" becomes a chorus.[21] It is through the experience of community, along with an exclusive axis of identity that ensures the performance of "Fan" as essential. It is the community's discourse which encourages and supervises this on-going revelation of essence.

Fans who did not see the series in first run, but who still claim to be a Fan are viewed somewhat suspiciously by other fans -- at least initially. In this exchange, two women who watched the series in first run comment on a third, who saw the series for the first time in 1996.

> Fan 1: I know [the new fan] says she's an AS&J fan, but I can't help but wonder if she won't get tired of it and move on.
>
> Fan 2: Yeah, I've wondered the same thing. I've been hooked since 1971. I'd never give AS&J up, but I'm not sure about [the new fan]. I think she'll find something new on TV and eventually lose interest. But I'll be an AS&J fan until the day I die.
>
> Fan 1: I know what you mean! But she acts like someone who saw the series when it was first on, you know?
>
> Fan 2: Yes! In fact, I though she'd seen AS&J in 70s, too. Maybe there's hope for her after all!

Essential & Constructed

What is under suspicion in this exchange is the new fan's "essential" nature as an *Alias Smith and Jones* fan, but it is cloaked in the specific premise of legitimacy and credibility (i.e. first run versus syndication textual socialization). However, in relation to the constructed aspect of fan identity this new fan has found a way to participate -- "she acts like someone who saw the series when it was first on" -- that allows her to be-in-common with the rest of the community. There are three elements to this performance of fan identity.

First is the use of the online forum to arrange in-person meetings. This willingness to meet face-to-face with other fans is important to members of the community, if their actions and comments are any indication. These meetings can include local get-togethers at someone's home, meetings at fan conventions, or one-to-one meetings when fans travel to the city or town of other fans. These short comments illustrate the first two of these meetings.

> I've been a Pete Duel fan for over twenty-five years and am still going strong! Just recovering from a mega Pete Duel wallow that I had with [fellow list member] yesterday when we met up in Liverpool...! (L.R.)
>
> Wanted to say how great it was to meet y'all [at Eclecticon]. I'm only sorry we didn't have more time, but [name withheld], I have to agree with you - it didn't feel like meeting with strangers at all - of course, [name withheld] doesn't count as a stranger, considering we grew up together - but the rest of you felt just as familiar. I had a great time - hope you all did as well. When can we do it again? (K.H.)

And the value of one-to-one meetings is illustrated by the expectation that fans have that other fans will make an attempt to get together when they travel.

> Fan 1: I was in Phoenix for about four days on business and everywhere I went, I was thinking ASJ-thoughts. (D.M.)
>
> Fan 2: What? What? But not enough ASJ thoughts to get together with a local fan? Do I need to hang up a wanted poster for Heyes & Curry fans

> passing through town?... I hope anybody coming through Phoenix in the future will feel free to contact me. (P.S.)
>
> Fan 1: Oh my God!!!!!! [P]! I am so sorry! I completely forgot! <hangs head in shame> I assure you that it was completely an unintentional slight. 4 days with musicologists will do that to you -- make you forget things I mean. OK, I'll go stand in the corner. (D.M.)

The community of fans is forged and maintained by the same "public discussions" and "webs of personal relationships" that Rheingold describes as the social glue of cyber-communities. And like the relationships at the WELL, which moved from online to off-line relationships (*Harpers*), *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom strives to build up the same kinds of both virtual and face-to-face relationships.

The second element, or process of "being-in-common" is the exchange of material goods within fandom. This activity is not limited to the online *Alias Smith and Jones* community. *The Outlaw Trail* has "Trading Post" and "Video Seekers" sections where fans place ads for items for sale and trade, as well as for items sought. However, the speed of locating, requesting and arranging the exchange of videos (including *Alias Smith and Jones* episodes and appearances by Pete Duel and Ben Murphy on television and in feature films), articles, photos, and the like is much faster online.

This exchange of various texts serves multiple functions. First, it provides all of the members of the community with the same basic set of texts for discussion. Second, this textual standardization allows for the boundaries of the community to be fixed (this is relevant to the community, this is not). Third, it creates a canon of works that all fans are expected to be familiar with -- and becoming familiar with these texts can mark a fan's transition from a novice in the community to a resident expert. Fourth, it allows for the material demonstration of trust as items loaned through the mail are often costly and sometimes irreplaceable. It also demonstrates the willingness to aid others in the community in their quest for knowledge and mastery of the material basis of the community, namely the works and references of *Alias Smith and Jones* and its two stars. And last, it provides the foundation from which fans negotiate shared meanings concerning the series and the characters. This provides both a common/shared interpretation of the series, making the fans part of an interpretive community, and also provides the basis for a common reading of the series in the fan fiction, which is itself a shared resource for the community.

In addition to the sharing of resources on the series and its stars, there is also an on-going analysis of these texts. This is the third process in the construction of "being-in-common." This analysis occurs spontaneously in the day to day conversations online:

> Fan 1: They must have been wanted elsewhere, too. In the pilot, for instance, Heyes rattled off the names and locations of several banks, in different states/territories, and the types of safes they have (which, presumably, he has breached, one way or another). (C.H.)
>
> Fan 2: Ah, but that doesn't necessarily mean the *law* knows they did jobs. Especially in their earlier days, before they were well known enough to have a "trademark" style, they could have committed a number of robberies that authorities didn't link to them. They wouldn't be wanted for those. Guilt notwithstanding. (Yes, I know I'm reaching. But you have to do that when reconciling consistencey errors sometimes.[22]) (L.W.)

Analysis also occurs in more organized ways. For example, one member of the listserve suggested that the group discuss each of the *Alias Smith and Jones* episodes, staring with the pilot (there are a total of forty-eight epiosdes). It was decided that the discussions would begin on Sunday and end on the following Sunday when the dialogue concerning the next episode began.[23] Initial comments lead to secondary and tertiary comments as this exchange shows.

> Initial comment: I thought Deputy Harker was suspicious of those "transients", but didn't know quite what to do about it. He kept asking Heyes and Curry about them; I get the impression he was almost waiting for them to tell him what to do. (J.P.)
>
> Secondary: Yeah, well, considering that that "law" sounded like something that was entirely fabricated by Lom, and Harker not exactly being Einstein... He probably didn't have a *clue* what he was suppose to do. (M.P.)
>
> Tertiary: [referring to the "law"] Oh, it _definitely_ was. Remember, Harker called it the _temporary_ transient act (C.H.)

To illustrate the depth of the fans' analyses I present these four common foci for comments surrounding the episodes of *Alias Smith and Jones* through which fans demonstrate, first, an attention to detail in the setting:

> I want to know why this little old lady from Boston was not only on a train heading for the Wild West, but why she was carrying a clipping -- not a whole newspaper, mind you, but a clipping -- about an amnesty deal being offered by the Governor of Wyoming." (C.H.)

Second, an attention to detail in performance:

> I particularly notice that Ben's *reactive* acting especially gets better as the series goes along. It was something that Pete excelled at -- you can see him reacting to what others are doing and saying around him. (D.M.)

Third, an attention to character details that provide an understanding of motivations and basic psychology:

> Kid shows an independent streak by going out there & he's also firm about deciding to work at the bank, so he doesn't indiscriminately follow Heyes' lead, but recognizes the right time to go along. (C.S.)

And last, critiques of the social aspects of the series, as this longer comment illustrates.

> Miss Porter is one of my most hated characters in the whole series, and certainly the most hated in this episode. What an exclusively dumb broad! I thought maybe I could think better of her if I thought she was very clever and played the dumb act to get what she wants. But unfortunately there is no indication of it anywhere, and I think she is just as dumb as she plays. Her father should never have left her alone with that bank. The line that irks me most is: "...but being only a woman..." WHAT!? *ONLY* a woman? What has womanhood to do with the fact that you don't know how to run a business? Don't hide behind such an excuse and drag down the whole female sex with you lady! (R.H.)

The attention to these kinds of details provides a basis for fan fiction and discussion. Thus knowledge in fandom can be seen as a kind of cultural capital that can be exchanged for membership and acceptance within the community, as well as for prestige and status. The exchange of information and opinion is the species that holds the community together and at the same time, it sets the limits of interpretation and defines who is inside and who is outside the community, such as the new fan who acts like a member of the community, but who, in the opinion of "long time" fans, may not be an essential *Alias Smith and Jones* fan. Through face-to-face meetings, the exchange of material goods, and the analysis of texts fans construct community, they produce "being-in-common," they enact the four processes Phelan attributes to the lesbian community, and they provide the space in which part of the fan "trajectory" takes place.

> I've made quiet a few good friends (local and far away) through my online activities and having found common ground in our fannish interests, we were often quick to find alot of other things we had in common. This led to get-together, endless general discussions (online and off) of staggering breadth and variety and a widening of my own range of interests. (D.M.)

Conclusion

In this work I hope I have demonstrated that television zine fans have created for themselves a community, both on- and off-line. Further, that their identities are tightly bound up with the activities and individuals they engage with in these communities. For the community of *Alias Smith and Jones* fans, separated by geographical distances, the online community has great significance. Community goals can be realized through computer-mediated discursive practices that aid in the process of community and identity building. CMC allows *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom to grow and expand, incorporating new members on a regular basis, and giving existing members he opportunity to squeeze out more fannish activity in the time they have available.

Fandom, like cyber communities "is a social experiment that nobody planned but that is happening nevertheless" (Rheingold, 6). Jones argues that CMC will lead the way to new communities that are: "global, local, and everything in between" (13). Fandom has been doing the same thing since the late 1960s with television fans participating the community from the U.S., Canada, the U.K., the Netherlands, France, Germany, Belgium, Japan, Brazil, Spain, Australian, Italy, and New Zealand. Despite being scattered across the global these fans share a common community and a common identity as fans of particular television series. And, as the use of the Internet increases among fans, this community continues to grow larger, more diverse and more intimately connected. This is possible because community encompasses both material and symbolic dimensions.

Essential & Constructed

Rheingold argues that virtual community is both real and meaningful in that it speaks to disenfranchised people who are seeking a more organic community amid the confusion and chaos of post-industrial society. The interesting question with regards to television fans is how and why popular culture provides the foundation on which community and personal identity is being build both on- and off-line. This is not a question that I can answer at this time, but it is clear that fans do build communities and based their identities on media-mediated images and stories.

Just as Carey advocated a reexamination of the transmission model of mass communication to incorporate his ritual metaphor, computer-mediated communication is ripe for an analysis of how its communities manipulate material and symbolic discourses to provide belonging and meaning for its participants. The amount of attention cyberspace and virtual community have received in the popular press indicates that CMC is already being considered in terms of its potential for new modes of communicative interaction and new types of cultural structures and forms. CMC is an environment, a placeless realm where meaningful individual and collective experiences happens. CMC and fandom allows members to base community not just on what we have in common but through a negotiation about what we will have in common; what we will share and how we will share it (Phelan, 95). And while the ability to define our lives and our values is not a matter of release from another's bondage be it hegemony, patriarchy, heterosexism, etc., it is a matter of (em)power(ment) (Phelan, 123).

NOTES:

1. *Alias Smith and Jones*, was a buddy western (with humor) that aired from 1971 to 1973 on ABC. Executive producer Roy Huggins also created hits like *Maverick* and *the Fugitive* and did most of the writing for *Alias Smith and Jones*. Solid ratings made *AS&J* a real competitor for first *Flip Wilson* and then *All in the Family*. On December 31, 1971, with most of the second season already filmed, Pete Duel, one of the stars, committed suicide. Duel was replaced by Roger Davis, who completed the remaining five episodes for the second season. A third season was cut short by cancellation after ten episodes.

2. Eclecticon, November 7-9, 1997. Newark, New Jersey.

3. Several of the fans who find their way to the listserve and the webpage also join *the Outlaw Trail* and the Pete Duel Commemorative Fan Club. As a result, the entire face of *Alias Smith and Jones* fandom is changing in some way. However, issues of *The Outlaw Trail* and *Duel Memories* prior to the establishment of the webpage or the listserve do provide a baseline for the community.

4. Like many of the fans in AS&J fandom, I watched the series when it first aired and felt an attachment to it. I considered myself a fan of the series and its two actors. However, I did not discovered AS&J fandom until 1986, and I was not an active participant in that community (beyond buying and reading zines) until 1988 when I published the first of fourteen (to date) *Alias Smith and Jones* zines.

5. Neither online site has the capacity for live chats. On the listserve members send comments to the list where they are then distributed to all the members. On an average day between 25-35 messages are generated. For the webpage members send their comments to the webmistress who then posts them in the "Folks are Talkin'" section. In both cases members reply to each other, carrying on a "conversation."

6. Very few popular films have sparked fan following in zine fandom with the exception being the *Star Trek* films, which are directly connected to the television series. Among the few films that have caught the fans' imaginations are the *Star Wars* trilogy and the *Lethal Weapon* trilogy. In both cases, a strong buddy element is central to the plot of the movies and the basis for entry into fandom.

7. Series that are currently popular in television zine fandom include: *The Professionals* (1970s British cop drama), *Due South* (1990s U.S. quirky cop drama), *X-Files* (current U.S. sci-fi drama), *Highlander* (current U.S.-Canada-French sci-fi co-production), *Starsky and Hutch* (1970s U.S. cop drama), *Alias Smith and Jones* (early U.S. 1970s western), *The Sentinel* (a current U.S.-Canadian action-adventure/cop/sci-fi co-production), and many more.

8. Television zine fans, who are almost exclusively women, also share a particular demographic profile. Not all members can be described in this fashion, but the majority are: white, heterosexual, liberal, middle-class, college educated, 30 to 50 years of age, overweight, and working in professional and semi-professional occupations (teachers, nurses, librarians, and administrative assistants being among the most common). Half are married and half are single. There is also a larger population of pagan, New Age and Eastern religion practitioners in television zine fandom than in the general public.

9. Fandom itself has a much longer history, beginning in the 1920s and 30s with the following that grew up around the science-fiction pulp magazines. Over time this fandom expanded into science-fiction literature, and, when television began showing sci-fi series, to television. But it was around *Star Trek* that zine fandom sunk its deepest roots, and *Star Trek* is commonly recognized within the television zine fan community as the genesis of their fandom.

10. Song tapes are created when fans take clips from their favorite series and splice them together with a commercial song as the background, making, in effect a fannish music video. These can be humorous or serious, straight or slash (homoerotic).

11. However, it is common in fan fiction to find two or more of these universes in a "crossover" story, that is, a story which combines the characters from two or more series. For example, the *Counterstrike* team might find themselves in Chicago on an assignment where they then meet the characters from *Due South*, who live and work in Chicago. Any temporal discontinuity that might be present if we looked at the actual years these series aired (*Counterstrike* 1991-93 and *Due South* 1995-96) are generally ignored by the fans.

12. Having been a participant in television zine fandom for nearly a decade now, I can only recall a handful of men who regularly attend conventions and submit to fiction zines. I have published over 80 fiction zines over last nine years, and during that time I have only received one story submission from a self-described man. My experience is not at all uncommon within the television zine fan community.

13. There are a few rare exceptions -- one zine based on a soap opera, one zine based on a sit-com, and a few drama series that have had fan stories appear in multi-media zines. But these are recognized as exceptions and do not generate nearly the level of submissions and sales as standard "muscledrama" zines.

14. Three are exceptions to this, including popular series with lone male heros (e/g/ *Stingray, The Pretender*), or with male/female buddies (e.g. *Remington Steel, Scarecrow and Mrs. King, The X-Files*). However, with the exception of *The X-Files*, none of these series have reached, even marginally, the levels of popularity seen with buddy series like *The Professionals, Starsky and Hutch* or *The Sentinel*.

15. This is not apparently a conscious re-writing process. Most fans do not set out to challenge cultural norms and expectations concerning male same-sex friendships, but this is exactly what the fans do when they re-write the male characters so that they share friendships that include all of the elements traditionally assigned to female same-sex friendships. This re-writing questions dominant assumptions as to what constitutes both masculinity and femininity (Jenkins, 1992; Penley, 1992).

16. However, it must be noted that fan do not have complete freedom in choosing these strategies or characteristics. Social structures and forces limit the range of agency fans enact. Michel de Certeau describes impertinent raids on the literary preserve by readers as "poaching" (a notion taken up in relation to fans by Jenkins, 1988). These readers are "travelers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves" (174). What must be noted is the prior existence of these literary (or televisual) "fields." Fans "poach" from what they are given by the entertainment industry (Jenkins, 1992). They utilize existing discourses, first "poaching" and then transforming them in ways unique to the community.

17. I do not want to opportuinistically or unreflexively co-opt a term that has traditionally been associated with gays and lesbians, and as such holds a particular constellation of meanings and political inflection. However, this phrase is commonly heard in the fan community and articulated in a similar fashion -- "I finally came out as a fan to some of my co-workers," for example. This is a first-order construct that begs for unpacking.

18. Mountain Media Con, July 1996. Denver, Colorado.

19. The penultimate stage of a fan tragectory differs depending on whether the individual is a consumer of fan products or a producer of these same products. (And on the individua;s' level of involvement in the community.) Many consumers become producers, creating stories or art, zines or music videos. And they might, at some point, receive recognition awards for their efforts (Fan-Quality Awards, Fan's Choice, editor's Choice). Producers expand their efforts, printing more titles, or a larger variety of titles, and might also receive awards for their work. However, some fans have suggested that the pinnical of fannish activity is the move from writing and publishing in fandom to a professional sale.

20. Married fans will generally include their husband's name and whether or not they have children; their names and ages if they do.

21. With rare exception, all of the members of the listserve, the website and *The Outlaw Trail* watched the series in first-run in 1971-73, and then again in syndication at various points in time. When they were watching for the first time they were, on average eight to fifteen years old, thus they represent a generational cohort of viewers. How this plays into their feelings about the series is an area that still needs to be explored.

22. Fans do not uncritically accept whatever they see in their favorite television series. When they find continuity problems fans will go to great lengths to come up with a rational explanation. If this isn't possible a consensus is often reached on a logical alternative. As a result, fans often feel that they are more loyal to the series that the producers and writers.

23. In addition to the exchange of comments on the various episodes, members also have between three and five other conversations present at the same time.

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National Print Media Coverage of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, 1911-1917

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National Print Media Coverage of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, 1911-1917

Claussen (1996) examined print media coverage of the two largest and latest U.S. men's movements--the mythopoetic movement, whose titular head is poet Robert Bly, and Promise Keepers (PK), founded by ex-football coach Bill McCartney. His findings that coverage of both groups has been significantly and consistently positive; feature-, rather than news-, oriented; and demonstrative of intermedia agenda-setting only in the case of mythopoetism--were significant in their own right. Specifically, Claussen not only performed the first social scientific study U.S. men's movements' media coverage, but his findings were largely contrary to what various agenda-setting, news performance and sociology of news theories and studies predicted.

Claussen was aware of the broader issues and longer history of men's movements, but media coverage of earlier men's movements, let alone a comparison and contrasting of the coverage of individual men's movements, was outside the scope of his first study. In an attempt to start placing Claussen's findings in historical context, this study proposes to examine (although to more limited extent than Claussen's thesis) coverage of the Men and Religion Forward Movement (MRFM), an early 20th century male Protestant religious revival to which Promise Keepers has been compared, by national print media, and compare and contrast coverage of MRFM and PK.

The Men and Religion Forward Movement: An Introduction and Brief History

PK has many characteristics in common with previous religious revivals. Halbrook's (1995) article in New Man (official PK magazine), headlined, "Is this revival? How does the Promise Keepers movement compare with the world's historical revivals?", ironically avoided the issue. He described revivals generally and quoted a seminary professor who said PK hadn't achieved revival status yet; the only specific revivals mentioned were the Great Awakening of the 1730s-1740s, Charles Finney's 1830s revival, and the United Prayer Meetings Revival of 1858, none of which PK was compared to. But Rabey (1996), and surely others, has compared PK to MRFM:

> An inspired Christian layman catches a vision for men, encourages them with a dual call to conversion and godly living, and along the way launches a Christian men's movement. Soon, pastors and organizations around the country join the effort, which sends

teams of speakers to major American cities, reaching more than a million men.

The Rev. Billy Sunday[19] is sometimes cited as the most direct inspiration for MRFM, but it is quite likely that even without Sunday, MRFM could have developed out of the potent combination of Muscular Christianity,[20] a U.S. movement since the late 1860s that by 1911 was in its declining years, and Social Gospel, a sociocultural, even political, agenda that was in its prime (Curtis, 1991; Gorrell, 1988; Handy, 1966; Rauschenbusch, 1917).

Bederman (1989) wrote that during September 1911-April 1912, MRFM drew over a million men to events in 76 cities and 1,083 towns. Smith (1987) said three books--Thompson *et al.*, 1911; Barbour, 1912; Messages of the Men and Religion Movement, 1912--were published by and about the movement; its "primary goal was to educate Christians about social conditions in their own communities and to inspire and equip them to improve these conditions" (p. 107).

Bederman (1989) understood that MRFM was the result of a "much broader cultural trend," but incorrectly attributed to MRFM to "the consolidation of a consumer-oriented, corporate capitalism [that] made Protestant men feel that their identity as men was uncertain and their religion was effeminate, [and caused] many middle-class men moved to recodify religion as especially manly" (p. 438). But MRFM, with its sophisticated use of organizations, media, money, literature, politicians and statistics, was a natural extension of, and not a reaction to, "consumer-oriented, corporate capitalism." The only reason why MRFM would have referred to religion as effeminate (no evidence exists that MRFM ever did so; the line in Collier's was a reporter's interpretation of the views of a group of teenagers) was because MRFM believed far too few men were attending church. MRFM literature was far from sexist: nowhere did MRFM advocate replacing with men, or even limiting the number of, women doing social work; a key MRFM goal was eliminating prostitution; MRFM literature: taught boys to respect both girls and women, did not take the opportunity to oppose suffrage, and seems to have complained about women working only when they neglected their families or they took jobs from men who needed them, which was probably a moderate to liberal position in 1911. Finally, MRFM recognized that in 1911, the involvement of men was required to solve social problems; after all, in 1912, men held almost every important position in America and women could not even vote.

PK says it is intentionally and successfully avoiding a political agenda; MRFM developed a specific agenda.[22] Smith (1987) reported that "The Movement's leaders encouraged Americans to promote peace, education and temperance, to improve municipal government, housing, food, recreation, the penal system, race relations, and the conditions of rural life, and to abolish prostitution" (p. 102); "support the demands of the American Federation of Labor for collective bargaining, higher wages, unemployment and old age pensions, better treatment of female employees, the abolition of child labor, and shorter hours and a safer working environment....aid women and alcoholics" (p. 104). Bederman admitted, "Official Men and Religion Forward publications ignored the women's movement entirely" (pp. 450-451) even though MRFM had the space, time, personnel, credibility and appropriate platform to comment on it--even condemn it--if it had wanted to.

Smith (1987) concluded that "While most of contemporary observers applauded its achievements, later historians have regarded the Movement as insignificant" (p. 108) because it produced "few permanent results" and certainly was not successful in its goal of recruiting three million men into regular church attendance and social work (p. 109). He explained that "The crusade failed to achieve its longer range goals in large part because its participants became increasingly preoccupied with intensifying debates over biblical authority, evolution and social Christianity," not to mention the distraction of World War I (p. 110). Not only did MRFM not endure, but evangelicals' support of social action also faded as they "became preoccupied with resisting efforts of theological liberals to control their denominational agencies," turned to "Premillenial beliefs that evil would increasingly flourish until Christ returned," and continued "fighting against evolution and...enforcing prohibition" (Smith, p. 116). Smith was probably overly critical of MRFM, however. He failed to mention, for instance, that it directly and immediately inspired the Labor Forward Movement (Nash, 1970; Fones-Wolf, 1982)--an effort to help make unions specifically and the working class generally more religious and more politically and socially progressive, despite common interests of progressive Protestants and labor for decades (Gutman, 1966). (A major leader of LFM was Charles Stelzle, who had just finished serving on the Social Service team of the MRFM leadership.)

Smith almost certainly underestimated MRFM's introduction of social scientific ideas and methods (see, for example, Men and Religion Forward Movement No. VI--Social Service: The Churches, n.d.) to both local governments and churches. (Greek [1992] detailed the "religious roots of American sociology," although failed to mention MRFM.)

PK members wonder about the compatibility of masculinity and their religious beliefs, and PK speakers and literature have complained about the church's "feminization." But directly attacking women's roles in organized Christianity is not nearly as prominent an issue for PK (or for MRFM and Social Gospel) as it was for Muscular Christianity. So while the Muscular Christianity movement may be said to have been an attempt to masculinize religion in a sexist way, and MRFM was an attempt to masculinize religion in a non-sexist way, Promise Keepers and other current Christian men's organizations could be said to be an attempt to religionize masculinity.

Literature Review: U.S. Print Mass Media Coverage of Religion

Religion coverage by U.S. media prior to World War II has received little attention from academia. In fact, the subject is notable primary by its absence or near absence in the literature (Emery and Emery, 1978; Sloan and Stovall, 1993). What little research has been conducted confirms the popular assumption that newspaper coverage of religion during the 19th century and first half of the 20th century has been minimal, inconsistent and negative (Buddenbaum, 1987), and biased, sometimes intentionally so (Delp, 1984; Ogles and Howard, 1984). Attempts to argue that religion has had unique, profound and even permanent influences on U.S. media have been of questionable success (Evenson, 1989; Nord, 1990 and 1994).

Men and Religion Forward Movement's Statement on its Coverage

National Print Media Coverage of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, 1911-1917

Perhaps uniquely among religious revivals in the United States, MRFM published a volume on the subject, The Church and the Press, which addressed the subject generally, then MRFM coverage, and then results of its surveys of newspapers, clergy and laymen on religion coverage. As Volume VII of Messages of the Men and Religion Movement, The Church and the Press, notes in its introduction:

> This Report is the first effort made by the Christian churches of North America to present a scientific, nation-wide study of the relation of the periodical press to religious work. The uniqueness of this volume will be apparent to all who read its pages; and its importance is even greater than its uniqueness....
>
> [T]he church is aroused upon the subject of publicity; that the old note of subserviency to the press has gone from the church; and that with the enhanced self-respect the church stands ready to put her business of publicity upon a business basis, and to require from the press the proper consideration which her place in the community deserves....
>
> Even the circulation of these questionnaires has had a widespread effect. It has set the newspapers and the churchmen to considering afresh this whole subject. Many special articles have appeared in the secular and religious press upon this theme of religious publicity; and all the publications that are issued for workers in the field of journalism and advertising have treated this subject again and again. The agitation in which this Commission has been permitted to bear a part has really had nationwide results. The work of the Commission, we are persuaded, has been worth while [sic], even had this volume not resulted" (pp. 1-3).

This book, one of seven volumes of the official Messages of the Men and Religion Movement (New York: Association Press, 1912), is significant for numerous reasons. Apparently no author of any previous mass communications book, article, thesis, or dissertation on U.S. me-dia coverage of religion, including Claussen (1996), has been aware of this volume, and yet it clearly is the first study of the subject using social scientific methods, and one of the earliest (and most extensive early) works on the subject. (The next significant book on U.S. media coverage of religion wasn't published until the 1930s.) Moreover, contrasted with most later works, The Church and the Press was positive, thankful and even optimistic about media coverage of religion. For these reasons, the chapter on print media coverage of MRFM is excerpted here at length:

> "Six scrap books each the size of a newspaper page, and each three inches thick, filled with Men and Religious [sic] clippings, are visible evidence that the Movement made an impression upon the country. Probably the statement is warranted that no other organized religious activity ever before received within so limited a period, such wide-spread attention from the public prints. Even further the historian may go, and record that this Movement marks a new era in the use of publicity by religion....
>
> "[Because of MRFM] has sprung new attitude of Christian leaders toward a wise and systematic cooperation with the press....[I]t remained for Men and Religion to demon-

strate the possibility of making a nationwide impression through the use of the periodical press....(pp. 99-100)

"Doubtless there was not a single daily paper in the land that did not publish articles of some sort concerning the new movement....All the press Associations carried frequent dispatches upon Men and Religion and hundreds of editorials interpreted the Movement.... Criticisms, mild and virulent[,] mingled with the chorus of approval; and these, too, stimulated thought....

"One reason for the extraordinary welcome accorded Men and Religion news in editorial offices was its 'practical' character....The masculine note in it all, the bigness of the Movement's sweep, its emphasis on social problems and its frank recognition of news values, all appealed to the editorial instinct, and unconventional, timely and with a definite local touch, the Movement won its way into first-page displays everywhere (pp. 100-101).

"Of course all this did not 'happen.' At different times there were three publicity experts at work at the headquarters...[and] efficient publicity activities of the executive officers and members of the traveling 'teams.' Every Committee of One Hundred had its subcommittee on publicity, and most of these engaged salaried press agents....

"The most notable of its [Commission on Publicity] activities has been the advertising campaign in the New York City daily newspapers. Twice a week, over a period of six weeks, there has appeared in all of the daily papers issued in English in New York City, a double column advertisement, five inches deep, bearing the Men and Religion caption.... [which] usually appeared on the sporting page and were so distributed that they were appearing in some papers every day in the week...(pp. 101-102).

"The object of this advertising campaign was to show the use of display advertisements in arousing the religious interest of an entire community....They were not designed to promote the Men and Religion Movement, or Men and Religion meetings. Rather they were meant as a broad, disinterested piece of Kingdom service."

"Assuredly the advertisements created comment. All over the city they were talked about, and in circles where religion is seldom mentioned. The very intangibleness of the advertisements puzzled readers. They could understand why soap and biscuit should be presented to the public through paid space in the newspapers, and it was not difficult to understand why certain definite meetings, what a crowd was desired, should make this form of appeal. But why the greater and more general claims of Christianity should appear in display advertisements, and on the sporting pages at that, made this modern Athens... wonder and talk....

"The press associations carried the story of the advertising campaign to all the daily papers in the land. The weekly magazines, and the publications devoted to newspaper-making, as well as the religious press, commented upon the innovation editorially. All over the land daily papers took up the subject as a theme for editorial discussion (pp. 102-103).

"The editorials indicated the reflex influence of the advertisements. The first that appeared, many others throughout the land following the same strain, boldly raised the question, 'Are the goods as advertised? Do the wares come up to the label? Will men find the church as broad and interested and helpful as these advertisements intimate?...

"A series of 'sky signs' [billboards] on Broadway bearing the cross, which, with splendid significance, has come to be identified with the Men and Religion Movement in New York, extended this advertising campaign. It was estimated that half a million persons daily read the one sign on Twenty-Third Street, which overlooks Madison Square and the converging streets...(p. 103-104).

"The responses to a poll of New York City pastors revealed a fifteen-to-one majority in favor of these new and general methods of paid publicity...(pp. 104-105).

"Of the publicity given to Men and Religion in the local newspapers and elsewhere it is perhaps unnecessary to speak. The New York dailies dealt with uncommon generosity with this Movement, in anticipation of the Congress and the local campaign. The iteration of headlines in the daily papers prepared the way for the coming of the Congress, and for a

> public reception of its message. The coincidence of the sinking of the *Titanic* with the opening of the Congress naturally overturned the well-laid plans of New York editors to treat the Congress with unprecedented fullness. The poster advertising the Congress, which has been widely circulated, has been made to serve the double purpose of conveying a Men and Religion message while at the same time inviting attention to the Congress.
>
> "The Publicity Commission adopted the method, which it believes to be ultimately most effective, of furnishing information to editors and writers, and of inspiring publicity activity on the part of others, rather than of trying to produce a great array of articles itself. Not all of the editorials that appeared in the daily papers and in magazines were quite as spontaneous as they seemed. It has been demonstrated that it is entirely feasible for a publicity bureau to cooperate with the press associations, with the local correspondents of out-of-town papers, with the magazines and weekly periodicals, and with the daily papers" (p. 106).

Here, MRFM ostensibly gives credit for the amount of publicity it received to the media themselves, and then gradually gives an increasing amount of information and an increasing amount of credit for that coverage to itself. Thanking the press for paying attention to MRFM really meant thanking the press for being so uncritical of, and willing to publish, MRFM press releases, pamphlets, columns and other materials. And the print media were not doing anything that they didn't do on a daily basis--printing information verbatim that they received from press releases, letters, telegrams and other publications; the key was simply the quantity and quality of material that MRFM was sending out. Note the book's reference to MRFM emphasizing the "practical" and "social problems," information being prepared by "three publicity experts" and local "salaried press agents," all of whom were trained in the "frank recognition of news values."

The book's reference to "[t]he weekly magazines" commenting on MRFM's advertising is curious; other than religious and charity magazines, no national, general circulation magazines indexed mentioned MRFM advertising, and few covered MRFM at all (see below). The book's reference New York City "dailies[']...uncommon generosity with this Movement" also is curious; although indexes are not available for New York City newspapers of the period other than The New York Times, it should have been quite positive about MRFM; after all, it was the establishment newspaper and MRFM was an establishment-dominated, mainline Protestant movement using what were then the latest social scientific, public relations, management and other methods. (The fact that MRFM speakers included some pro-labor and/or pro-Socialist speakers was seen as a strength or irrelevant to other MRFM leaders.) But The New York Times provided mostly local and later international coverage, little on MRFM as a national organization or movement (see below); and even the local coverage was not all positive. MRFM's book attributes lack of coverage of its final Conservation Congress to being "bumped" by the *Titanic*'s sinking--coverage of which was indeed extensive in at least The New York Times for weeks--but it also is possible that editors believed that Conservation Congress speakers simply didn't have anything newsworthy to say.

Coverage of the Men and Religion Forward Movement

Considering again that MRFM drew more than a million men throughout the U.S., was spearheaded nationally by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and International Sunday School Association, was interdenominational (11 Protestant organizations endorsed it), was relatively uncontroversial, and was executed locally by committees of prominent citizens and mainline Protestant ministers, MRFM received very little national coverage. The Readers Guide for Periodical Literature for the period 1911-1917 lists only 28 articles, 27 of them between May 6, 1911, and March 11, 1913. The New York Times index for the period includes only 14 articles--all between Jan. 8, 1912, and July 27, 1913--13 of which are only a few paragraphs long or less (Times articles are also included in this survey because although the Times was not the national publication it is today, it was even then an agenda-setter in New York and national journalism).

Where the 28 articles were published and salient aspects of their content are detailed here to provide a complete picture of MRFM coverage. Apparently the first article about MRFM was published May 6, 1911, in--not surprisingly--The Survey, a religious charities magazine. Essentially an extended press release about the Movement's launching, it reported that MRFM meetings would be held in 90 cities between September 1911 and May 1912; that a national committee of 97 persons had been established and that local committees were to have 100 members each; and that eight-day-long meetings in each city would offer experts in religion, social service and "shop and factory work" (p. 205), although it seemed to emphasize social service over the other two topics; it quoted at length a letter from 15 "well-known social workers" endorsing MRFM, including most notably Jane Addams of Chicago and Charles Stelzle. The article also noted that MRFM had been conceived five years earlier by H.W. Arnold, then secretary of the International Y.M.C.A., and listed national officers; James G. Cannon was chairman, Fred B. Smith (although later campaign leader) was starting off as an associate campaign leader, and--surprisingly--Stelzle held no position at all despite his long work in bringing religion to working class men.

Two articles appeared in October. The October 1911 issue of The Missionary Review of the World argued that MRFM was a logical development of a national if not international religious revival then underway. But it predicted that MRFM would succeed because, though

> substantially a lay enterprise,...[s]uch a coordination and correlation of Christian forces never has been attempted before, and the possibilities of their united systematic effort are not to be lightly estimated by human judgment, when the unifying, energizing power impelling the whole work is the Holy Spirit" (p. 752).

MRFM was concentrating on "Evangelism, Bible Study, Boys' Work, Missions, and Social Service" (p. 753), with no mention of "shop and factory work," and that evangelical work abroad would be represented through participation by the Laymen's Missionary Movement. Despite dropping "shop and factory work" from the agenda, however, this article approvingly quoted a Brooklyn minister concerned about non-Christians who said they saw no reason to believe: "The Men and Religion Movement, if it does anything, ought to lift this incubus" (p. 753). The article, though pointing out that MRFM would be temporary, urged and expressed hope that such work would be perpetual; it warned, however, in the spirit of Muscular Christianity, that Christianity needed to offer "a task big enough for men and absorbing enough to compel the loss of the sense of self....Men need an emphasis on the heroic and aggressive in Christianity" (p. 754).

An Oct. 14, 1911, Survey editorial praised MRFM's ecumenism ("Not as Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans, or Methodists; not as Evangelicals or Trinitarians; not as Anti-Catholics, or Anti-Semites, or Anti-anything whatsoever; but as positively and directly interested in the social welfare" [p. 989]). It criticized previous revivals ("ephemeral as they were emotional; superficial in their methods, transitory in their influence, negative in their effects: [p. 989]), but expressed confidence ("sincerity, humility, and courage...[are] the most impressive qualities of the [MRFM] leaders" [p. 989]) and hope in MRFM ("more than a revival, more than a week's campaign, more than an emotional appeal...its distinctive keynote, service to fellow men" [p. 990]). It concluded that "No mere enlargement of the nominal number of church members, no multiplication of religious organizations, is convincing evidence of the growth of religion" (p. 990), and that, "everywhere at hand [are] some people who have worked out these relations of the various aspects of social reform and who are ready to come forward on request with their specific plans and remedies, which the individual church member may adopt or reject without unreasonable demands upon either his time or his intelligence" (p. 990).

An article in the November 1911 issue of Current Literature--a sort of Reader's Digest of the day--provided a few introductory paragraphs on a news topic and then paraphrased and quoted various parts of an article from other publications, in this case, The Continent, a Chicago Presbyterian weekly; Boston's The Congregationalist; The New York Times; New York City's Freeman's Journal; and Chicago's Unity. Current Literature asserted that "Few would deny that revivals of the sort conducted by Moody and Sankey thirty or forty years ago would now be considered an anomaly" (p. 529), but explained MRFM's broad support, including from William Jennings Bryan and J. Pierpont Morgan. It reported the Continent writer's observation that various Protestant churches should not consider themselves "in any fashion competitors or rivals" (p. 529), and that MRFM was requiring cities to be visited "to do a great deal before the evangelists appear" (p. 530). Current Literature then explained that MRFM was too new to evaluate its work, and that various publications were predicting factors necessary for success. The Congregationalist, among other points, told MRFM to consider itself successful if men developed a "higher appreciation [of] the dignity of the Christian life," (p. 531) regardless, in part, of "notices in the press favorable or otherwise" (p. 531). While Unity said that MRFM wasn't preaching "new thinking and fresh interpretations of the old verities," The New York Times already was weighing in, however, with the opinion that MRFM wasn't emotional enough:

> In order to have strong effects the movement must stir the emotions of the people. No revival of religious spirit can be successfully made through merely intellectual appeal. The overemotionalism of former revivals has frequently been followed by relapse, of course,

> but that need not be the case when the emotional appeal is directed with sagacity and well controlled" (p. 531).

Four articles appeared in December 1911. The first, in the Dec. 16 issue of The Outlook, described MRFM as a "sounder kind of the evangelistic campaign, of the broader sort of social investigation, and of the active and practical type of church federation" (p. 892), whose work was intended to establish "permanent" activities in cities visited by MRFM, which was called:

> "first...attempt to revolutionize the lives of individual men through the power of religion applied to them personally has been based, not merely upon an emotional appeal, but upon, first, an intelligent study of the community in which those men live, and, second, upon the conviction that religion revolutionizes a man's life only as it enables him to render service to his neighbors and to his neighborhood" (p. 892).

The second article, in the Dec. 21 issue of New York's Independent, was written by Henry Rood, "Publicity Secretary of the National Committee of Ninety-Seven for the 'Men and Religion Forward Movement.'" Claiming that MRFM planning had started in May, 1910, Rood said MRFM "has no new religion to offer, no new religious fad to suggest. All that is new...[are] new methods [which] are necessary" (p. 1362). Rood explained that "For too long a time practically the whole burden of the church has been laid on the shoulders of the minister and the women of the church" (p. 530) as a fact and a criticism of men, not a call to push or keep any women out. Rood devoted the rest of his article to explaining goals and methods (such as "not...a trace of emotionalism or sensationalism in this entire campaign" which was to be "presented calmly, sanely, logically, so that it will convince the average man, who is a man of sane, logical, common sense [p. 1354]), MRFM's media coverage ("amount of publicity given to it by newspapers has been enormous everywhere" [p. 1364], including a Catholic-authored article in the Nov. 12 Hartford Courant and a Portland [Ore.] Jewish Tribune article Nov. 14), its results, and its fundraising problems. A Dec. 23 Survey article attempting to start assessing MRFM's results, and gave three-quarters of a page of small type to Stelzle to write on Dallas, Texas. Stelzle said MRFM found that the city

> has no housing laws, no garbage collector, no inspector of water nor meat, scarcely an adequate inspection of milk, and the laws with reference to the social evil were not enforced on account of the evident laxity of public opinion concerning the matter" (p. 1396).

It encouraged "a negative attitude with reference to the saloons, the motion picture show, and the social evil [prostitution]" and advocated better "housing conditions," resulting in a "quick cleaning up campaign by the city authorities" (p. 1396). It suggested a "vice commission ...bureau of municipal research and efficiency...cooperation between the churches and social workers... [and] exchange of fraternal delegates between the ministers' association and the central labor union."

A Dec. 23, 1911, Collier's article supplied the title and hypothesis for one of two major journal articles on MRFM, as Gail Bederman took out of context, from the middle of the Collier's article: "'The women have had charge of the church work long enough,' was their [400 hundred boys under 18 in Trenton] sentiment, too."[27] But far from Bederman's implication that reporter Arthur H. Gleason's interpretation of teenagers' thoughts was an accurate summation of MRFM or its coverage, the line was unique. And the entire article was unusual, filled with irrelevant and occasionally inaccurate material, and generally negative in its first half, generally positive but with a decreasing amount of detail in the second half. The article's title, "Going After Souls on a Business Basis: The Religion Forward Movement Insists that Virtue Be Capitalized in Good Works," would indicate that it covers the way the MRFM organization used modern management, marketing, social science and other new methods and techniques. Instead Gleason described--virtually caricatured--campaign leader Fred Smith as a

> ruddy, strongly built man... 'A great big he-man'...Middle Westerner, sincere, human, fearless, with a clear, true eye. Men listen to him gladly, for he is hearty and democratic. He believes in giving men a man's job to do in church work....hearty meat eater[], getting away with four meals a day."[28]

Gleason incorrectly called MRFM a "good old-time...good old-fashioned revival," questionably claimed that Smith was "wise in the manipulation of emotions," and quoted the most charismatic MRFM speaker, Raymond Robins, to imply that he had compromised his principles to maximize his popularity. Finally, Gleason detailed MRFM's size and scope and noted that of "several thousand" newspaper clippings about MRFM "three-quarters of them told, in a brisk, newsy item, some story of social service or of some episode in the campaign for boys." Gleason's discussions of MRFM's actual results, however, were surprisingly unsupported, concluding without providing details, "the movement is inducing employers of labor to give better treatment to employees, freeing class-conscious workingmen from bitterness, and bringing all hands together in the job of rescuing boys"; "double[d] the attendance of men and boys in Bible-study groups," an assertion not supported even by MRFM documents; resulted in "gains in unselfishness, in seriousness of purpose, in direction of effort"; "won all sorts of persons, unmoved by appeals to salvation, and uninterested in the clash between capital and labor"; and "brought new life at higher levels into sagging communities." In any case, the article contained no indication that MRFM was attempting to discriminate against women; in context, the sentiment attributed by Gleason to New Jersey teenagers criticized men's lack of involvement in social issues and did not seek to exclude or remove women, thereby praising women's social work both directly and indirectly.

January 1912 brought one article in The Literary Digest (Jan. 6) alternately quoting and paraphrasing the Collier's article, and three short articles in The New York Times. The first (Jan. 8) reported that a local MRFM committee had been formed to prepare for Manhattan and Bronx events by mid-April, the second (Jan. 24) reported on a MRFM meeting in Philadelphia the day before, and the third (Jan. 29) reported on a MRFM eight-day campaign that started in Baltimore the day before. Among other facts, it reported that "of the 8,000 men present several hundred indicated a desire to engage for the first time in church work." MRFM's national post mortem tends to indicate that most of those "several hundred" did not follow through on their "desire."

A Feb. 2 article--datelined Pittsburgh, Feb. 1--in The New York Times reported that:

> Declarations to the effect that J. Pierpont Morgan had inspired the attacks upon Socialism voiced here by evangelists in the Men and Religion Forward Movement elicited vehement denials to-day from the Rev. John M. Dean and Dr. Clarence A. Barbour. They admitted, however, that the financier had contributed at least $5,000 to the budget for financing the religious campaign.
>
> "Dr. Dean said:
>
> "'Mr. Morgan is not paying the specialists engaged in this movement to score the Socialists. He did contribute $5,000 to the cause, but it was without any ulterior motive.'
>
> "Dr. Raymond Robins of Chicago, an authority on social conditions, has been the particular target of Socialists at the public meetings by reason of his utterances, but others back of the movement declare they are not responsible for Dr. Robins's [*sic*] political sentiments."

Why did The New York Times publish this item, of questionable news value since it essentially only presents responses to rumors? Perhaps the Times had a *de facto* policy of covering all news related to men such as Morgan. Perhaps it was a "slow news day." Perhaps the Times wanted to cast doubt on MRFM. The Times was not covering MRFM regularly, let alone completely.

Although how much controversy attended Morgan's donation is now uncertain, the next day's issue of The Survey (Feb. 3, 1912), extensively covered a MRFM campaign in Hartford--and Robins--and shed light on the connection between Robins and Socialists. In addition to preaching Christianity, Robins told Connecticut men that

> the most pressing problem of our times is the problem of democracy in industry....You must have either trade agreements or socialism. If you dam up the democratic movement [labor unions] it will break out in strange ways and perhaps attack not only interest and rents and profits but some of the greatest things of our civilization (p. 1675).[29]

Although opposed to socialism, however, Robins (p. 1675) also criticized modern capitalism:

> He sets forth the other factors in the industrial cleavage--our modern production for profit more than for use; the end of the western frontier which was a social safety-valve for the cities; absentee capitalism, the employer no longer knowing his men; women in industry, complicating every situation; immigration; casual labor with its hundreds of thousands of unemployed and half employed. But of all these forces the surge of democracy is chief.

The Survey's writer, Arthur P. Kellogg, expressed subtle skepticism by summing up MRFM with:

> So much for Men and Religion Week. Will it last? Will there be permanent results? That, says Robins, is up to Hartford....Many a man in many a walk of life in Hartford believes today that a long stride towards that understanding of one another's needs was taken during Men and Religion week" (p. 1678)

Three articles on MRFM were published in March, by which time coverage seems to have started polarizing into fairly negative coverage (due to either MRFM's lack of tangible results, or responses from individuals or organizations prominent in U.S. religion not associated with MRFM [perhaps they were jealous and/or defensive]) and quite positive pieces written by MRFM officials or inspired by its publicity machine. For instance, the March 6 New York Times noted that a sign, "Men and Religion Forward Movement. Welcome for Everybody in the Churches of New York. Religion for Men and Men for Religion" had been erected in 18 1/2-foot letters of light bulbs at the corner of 23rd Street and Broadway. The March 9 Literary Digest announced that Lutheran (Missouri Synod) ministers on Long Island released a public statement explaining a decision to not participate in MRFM, which they objected to on grounds that "it is contrary to the will of God to ignore or make light of doctrinal differences" (p. 486). The March 30 issue of The Survey previewed the upcoming (April 19-24) Christian Conservation Congress,[30] highlighting the event's only woman speaker, Jane Addams (the other speakers were "Secretary of the Interior Fisher, representing President Taft, John Mitchell, William Jennings Bryan, John Wanamaker, William T. Stead of London, and such an array of prominent preachers and bishops," including Raymond Robins).

April, MRFM's official closing month, was marked by six articles on MRFM, all in the same publications as before; again, articles were either fairly negative, or quite positive but obviously written by MRFM leaders or captive of its public relations machine. Back to back articles in the April 6 Survey covered Men and Religion Forward campaigns in the south (by Charles Stelzle) and its Social Service Campaign, particularly in the West. Stelzle (p. 11) was characteristically candid: "It would be foolish to state that social conditions in the South are ideal. Unfortunately in many sections the municipalities are suffering on account of an inefficient conservatism on the one side and a criminal radicalism on the other." He added that

> standards of education were found to be extremely unsatisfactory as in very few states in the South is there a compulsory education law...[recommendations were made on the] economic study of the liquor problem with reference to the attitude of the workingman toward the saloon.... [and] it was important to bring these men [church members] into personal contact with the conditions surrounding their churches (p. 12).

The issue also included excerpts from various lectures by Robins, introduced by campaign leader Fred B. Smith. Smith conceded that "Years may be necessary before the religious organizations will be prepared to adopt fully the curriculum," but it is unclear whether this was an expected or unacceptable result of MRFM's "primary effort upon educational functions rather than inspirational or converting ones" (p. 33). In any case, he said, the MRFM--with a "specific masculine call"--had made a "direct insistent attack upon the peculiar man-and-boy problem--the lack of which has been the point of criticism in a good many such efforts heretofore." Smith concluded in fact, that "the church now has a definite responsibility for anything that takes place in the town," and, ironically only two years before World War I started, hoped that the "apostle of romance of a world conquest will seem less inclined to belittle the prosaic home tasks as not being big enough to command the attention of strong men." Robins endorsed Louis D. Brandeis' arguments to "limit the hours of working women so that those women might not be forced to surrender their right share of a decent human life" (p. 35) and complained that "American...men and boys and girls [are] breaking down under the strain of a pitiless and materialistic attitude toward life."

Important to note in rebutting Bederman's conclusions, Robins (p. 44) explained that:

> people who talk about women's invasion of industry of course are talking very superficially. Women never invaded anything. They are simply following the old industries that have been taken from the home and put in the factory....
>
> Woman has gone to the factory with her old traditional life. She is an individualist. All her past history has made her an individualist. In the main she expects to make and have a home of her own; she has no idea of collective action or of permanent relationship in industry. She may be an industrial worker through long years, but that is not her expectation. She goes into industry with her traditional attitude toward hours and wages, working long hours for small pay. She is the victim of her virtues in industry; she is more economical, more willing, more surely sober than man. And the result is that for a great deal of labor she is not only as satisfactory as, but more satisfactory than, men. The result is that many women, not themselves head of families, have displaced in the industrial world heads of families, men who were charged with the responsibility of the home; and the great social fact is that women as a rule work for from one-fourth to nearly one-half less than men at the same labor. Now this has had a great effect upon the industrial strain, a great effect in forcing the industrial problem more and more keenly to the front, and forcing the men who labor to fall back upon one device after another to protect their industrial opportunities and their standard of living.

Robins (p. 54) hoped that:

> possibly the highest value of this Men and Religion Forward Movement is that it is going to mark the time when that [a Social Gospel preacher not being invited back to a church] may not be said any more, when those men who have an ear to the whole social message will be working out in their daily lives that glorious ministry of the incarnate God upon earth 1900 years ago.

A short article in the April 7 New York Times reported MRFM's defense of its advertising; the organization said that its advertising was only to "remind the people that the churches are eager to serve them," not to promote the upcoming Christian Conservation Congress. An April 20 Literary Digest article simply paraphrased and quoted from Lansing's Survey piece, while the April 27 Survey detailed MRFM campaigns and results in New York City, Buffalo, Seattle, Baltimore, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Kalamazoo, and Newark. In New York City, where MRFM work was to be continued permanently by the Laity League of the New York Federation of Churches, MRFM made "minute recommendations...in the fields of immigration, housing, justice and probation, the police, recreation and amusements, industries and industrial welfare, education, municipal and social agencies, health and sex education" (p. 155). The article frankly explained (p. 156), among other points, that in lower Manhattan:

> twenty-four active Protestant churches in the neighborhood can no longer find the sorts of people with whom they have dealt in the past. On Palm Sunday a total attendance at ten of these churches including morning and evening services was 1,440.... Protestant churches have either become dead institutions of valueless service or, as in the case of fourteen of them, have developed strong social work among foreigners.

From Buffalo, a Frederic Almy reported (p. 157) that

> Although I am a Unitarian, and that denomination is omitted in the Men and Religion movement, I was made chairman of the social service committee in Buffalo, and was social service leader of the campaign in Washington....[C]hurch backing is what social work lacks and needs.

The article reported that "In Seattle the movement took a very practical turn on account of the nonpartisan municipal election which immediately followed it. The anti-tuberculosis bond issue and the charter amendment in regard to public welfare were thoroughly talked over in the Men and Religion institutes" (p. 158) and in Baltimore, MRFM was guardedly optimistic about its effects because "it is too much to expect that all of the more than 250 Protestant churches will be a unit" (p. 159). Finally, MRFM was making an impact in Newark despite the fact (p. 161) that

> the attitude of many of the ministers preceding the eight-day campaign apparently indicated that they were unwilling to have put before them their own peculiar problems or did not care to stand the test that would come with the results.

An April 27 Literary Digest piece, quoting and paraphrasing Boston's The Congregationalist and Christian World, highlighted conclusions (p. 886) that MRFM

> has not 'swept like a flame' through the country, but it has 'deeply interested a considerable number of men'...[although] neither be-fore, during, nor after the meetings has the main thought of the masculine portion of a community been directed to the things of religion.

On the other hand, MRFM (p. 886)

> 'has charted afresh the work of the Church of Christ in America....The movement has put many men at work....work is going on, which but for this movement might never have been started....It has claimed the masculine strength of the nation for great tasks, upon whose thorough and speedy accomplishment depends the very life of the Republic.'

And it featured "The one man whose life-story and burning message never failed to thrill great audiences was Raymond Robins, the social expert" (p. 886). An article published the same day in The Outlook was even more glowing, attributing to MRFM accomplishments that later would be expected from, and left to, crusading journalists and politicians (pp. 891-893).31

May 1912 was post-mortem month, a time to wrap-up coverage of the Conservation Congress, and assess MRFM's past and future impacts; coverage thus either had to focus on the impressive size, scope and initiative of MRFM and ignore the question of whether MRFM actually accomplished anything, or candidly confess that while MRFM may have had an impact on clergy, government, media and perhaps social workers, that its direct impact on the public was minimal. May's issue of Missionary Review of the World listed the five messages it thought MRFM had successfully communicated,[32] seven of MRFM's "general ideals"[33] and reprinted seven "tests" suggested by Don O. Shelton, president of the National Bible Institute, by which MRFM and other "Forward Movements" could be measured.[34] It concluded that (p. 380):

> The Men and Religion Movement may not measure up to each of these [tests] and has not presented a solution of [sic] religious and social problems, but it has aroused many sleeping and inactive church-members to a sense of their obligation to God and their fellow men.

MRFM also finally received coverage--with a 14-page-article no less--from Everybody's Magazine, a large-circulation consumer book. Starting with the conclusion that MRFM was "a dream that, in the realization, has stirred the hearts and minds of millions of men in all parts of this country; has aroused them to action in behalf of others on a colossal scale," it then tells the story of that dream originating with the young Harry W. Arnold of the Young Men's Christian Association's International Committee. Arnold had proposed in part (p. 637),

> let us wake up the men of America until they will abolish child-labor, tear down fire-traps, shut up tenements that have bad sewerage, bad ventilation, insufficient light. Let's arouse the religious spirit throughout this nation until all the children in every city have playgrounds, until public opinion closes immoral shows, until employers and employees alike are compelled by public sentiment to treat each other fairly; until the divorce epidemic is checked, and the integrity of American family is once more assured.

As MRFM blossomed (p. 639),

> Within a few months there were no fewer than fifty of these executive secretaries, and at present every one of the seventy-six campaign centers has its salaried man....A complete line of printed matter was prepared for use in the campaigns--pamphlets, leaflets, 'flyers,' small books.

In keeping with the times and MRFM's sociopolitical goals (p. 640),

> There was to be no sensationalism, no undue emotionalism, not a suggestion of hysterical

> excitement. Those doing evangelistic work were to present, calmly and as convincingly as possible, the proposition that the rules of life laid down by Jesus of Nazareth constitute the sanest, most logical, most sensible guide for daily affairs here and now in the United States of America.

The media became involved in at least two ways. In conjunction with a typical MRFM campaign in South Bend, "The three daily newspapers had started in to give several columns of space each day to the events, and this was rapidly increased to pages, including heavy display advertising" (p. 645). On the other hand (p. 649), in another city, after a MRFM social service specialist named the owners of

> houses of prostitution....Threats of libel suits were made against local newspapers that published a report of his speech, and he was cited to appear before the grand jury of that community, which he gladly did. After he had produced considerable evidence prepared for just such a contingency, the libel suits were hastily dropped, and the social-science specialist was permitted to depart, with the thanks of the grand jury.

The Survey (May 4, 1912) provided analysis for its readers (p. 184), in part, by citing the Conservation Congress remarks of the country's leading Social Gospelist:

> That the gospel of reform preached by the present-day social worker has been made orthodox in the Protestant churches of America, has become at last a dogma in the Christian faith, was the portentous way in which Professor Walter C. Rauschenbusch of Rochester Theological Seminary last week summarized the achievement [of MRFM].

In addition (p. 187),

> Professor Rauschenbusch voiced the feeling of the radical wing of churchmen when, in speaking of the seventy-five campaigns conducted up and down the United States during the past winter, he declared that if the appeal to social service had been left entirely out, the movement would not have left its imprint on a single city....[H]e prophesied a reactionary movement, a back eddy by men who cling to individual regeneration as the only ideal for the church to set before itself.

The Survey story also noted (and printed in full) Jane Addams' anti-prostitution speech, and that at the Congress (p. 185),

> Statistics of immigration, of the prevalence of saloons, of juvenile delinquency, of women and children in industry, of the amount of preventable disease, and of the extent of bad housing were set forth in legend and device familiar to those who have attended conferences of social workers.

The Outlook published the same day (May 4) asked whether MRFM had started "A permanent awakening?" Speculating that "The most important religious event of the present century thus far will possibly prove to be" MRFM, it attributed the Movement to a "keen sense of the inefficiency of the churches in meeting modern needs and copying with modern perils" (p. 9). It concluded that MRFM's "progress is likely to be quickened by the now increasing tension of industrial conditions" despite the fact that "[m]uch apathy and inertia remain to be overcome" (p. 10).

The New York Times reported May 7 that the MRFM's Continuation Committee had turned over responsibility for MRFM "results and recommendations" to the Federation of Churches and other "existing organizations." On May 13, it reported on a speech by Cardinal Farley in which he criticized socialism, criticized all non-Catholic religions because they "'do not know how to introduce religion into the education of their children,'" and "condemned" MRFM as "totally unnecessary for any well organized and true religion" (p. 5).

The May 9 Independent, in the meantime, had published an article by William T. Ellis, MRFM's publicity committee secretary, assessing MRFM's success. Most significantly for this study, Ellis bragged at length about how much media attention the movement had received,[35] and noted (p. 987) MRFM had issued a report on

> the relation of the press and the churches. This last is the most radical of the documents, and the only one actually based on widely gathered questionnaires. It is expected to mark an era in the adjustment of religious work to the agencies of publicity. It undertakes to write the epitaph of the 'pulpit notice,' as the commonest form of religious news in the daily press.

Ellis also admitted that MRFM had not succeeded in bringing three million men and boys into churches (but just MRFM's attendance alone was "extraordinary") and later that the "country has had enough of general religious 'movements' for some time to come" (p. 988); claimed that in "many cities visited, some have been deeply and apparently permanently affected" (p. 984); and cynically suggested that many businessmen supported MRFM because it "means business" (p. 985). The publicity committee secretary bragged that "The denominational national brotherhoods have now adopted the five-fold program" (p. 986) of MRFM, and that "While evangelists and social workers were railing at each other as inadequate, this movement gathered them both....The waste and weakness of competitive Christian service were made to seem wicked" (p. 986).

June coverage was similar to May coverage, with the June 1912 Current Literature attempting to assess "What the Men and Religion Forward Movement Actually Accomplished." While its editors concluded that "very little adverse criticism has been printed" (p. 675) about MRFM, it emphasized that MRFM held 7,062 meetings, including 8,332 addresses; had an attendance of 1,492,646; conducted 6,349 interviews; but successfully "committed to personal service" only 26,280 men and boys, and "committed to personal allegiance to Jesus Christ" only 7,580 (p. 673) --or about one-half of one percent of the total attendance figure! In the Dec. 14, 1912, Survey, Frederic Almy argued that MRFM's comprehensive report on social service (the second of MRFM's seven volumes of "messages") should be sent to "active church members and pastors of every faith" and that it was "a pity that this Protestant movement could not include the older Roman Catholic church and the still older Jewish church" (p. 330). The Jan. 30, 1913, New York Times added the MRFM was not as successful as expected, if only because The New York Christian Advocate had reported disappointing church membership figures the day before. Former govern-ment statistician Dr. H.K. Carroll had told the Advocate that church membership had increased on-ly 579,852 in 1912--despite MRFM, a total population increase in the U.S. of 1.3 to 1.6 million, and the fact that the 1911 increase had been 595,338, or 15,486 more! The March 1, 1913, Litera-ry Digest noted "a year of 'Men and Religion'" by paraphrasing and quoting "Dr. Frederick Lynch's optimistic summary...in The Christian Work," which said, in part, that MRFM made "some contributions of great value to the religious life." They included, Lynch believed (p. 461),

> organization of men's clubs in churches where there had been none before....got religion talked about and obtained for it a conspicuous place in the newspapers....when the daily paper devotes a column or so to religious matters for a week it does create an impression on the ungodly. It is reported that in one town a saloon-keeper became quite alarmed through his daily paper. There was so much space devoted to meetings that he said to his bartender, 'If this 'ere thing goes on much longer, Jim, the whole ------- town will get religion and we'll have to quit.'

Overall, however, Lynch thought (p. 461) "perhaps the most striking fruit of the movement is the interest which has been awakened in all the countries of the world."

The size and scope of MRFM generally and its Conservation Congress specifically prompted three additional developments: plans to take MRFM to Canada and overseas; a Labor Forward Movement (LFM), which Charles Stelzle--among others--was not surprisingly interested in encouraging if not leading; and a Commission on Inter-Church Federations.[36] LFM--formed to "spread a knowledge of the basis of trade to spread a knowledge of the basis of trade unionism and of some of the things for which trade unions stand," said the June 22 Survey--was launched during a two-week May meeting in Minneapolis. A MRFM team's plan to circle the globe was announced in the Oct. 19 Survey, with additional brief coverage in The New York Times (Jan. 2, Jan. 4 and March 11, 1913)[37]; and the Jan. 11, 1913, Outlook. The only extensive coverage of the worldwide tour appeared in the July 27, 1913, New York Times--a full-page with several photographs. (A book of Smith's letters on the trip also was privately published by Cannon [1913].) Starting with Fred Smith's declaration that "a universal expression of religion is now on its way, gathering force year by year, and religion itself is being standardized throughout the world," he went on to reemphasize MRFM's accomplishments and goals in the U.S. Most details of the MRFM team's visits to China, Japan, Hawaii, the Philippines, Australia and South Africa were left for the end of the article, where Smith was forced to "admit that organized Christianity is passing through a very serious test in its relation to the great masses of men. 'It would be childish to blink facts that stare every level-headed man in the face,' he declared." Nevertheless, Smith projected optimism, claiming that its auditorium in Kyoto was "jammed inside, and outside was an enormous crowd of Japanese men," and that Lord Mayor of Melbourne said, "We have been amazed here to see this tremendous interest in the religious spirit shown by the men of Melbourne. You and your associates have filled the Town Hall day after day...."[38] Smith noted that in the East,

> churches are pulling together, working for the common good, as they never have in the United States. Here at home, our churches find so little to do that they are split into scores of petty sects and denominations, most of them jealous of each other like a group of narrow-minded old women in a country village, and each afraid that some other one will get more credit, become more prosperous, more influential than itself.

MRFM was mentioned only once more as a current event in national media. The Oct. 20, 1917, issue of The Survey reported that Fred Smith had called a Pittsburgh meeting five years after MRFM's end to assess its impact. The "congress," held under the auspices of the MRFM-inspired Commission on Interchurch Federations, brought together 500 delegates from only 30 cities, and most of it focused on helping the war effort and democracy. The short article's only paragraph on the MRFM campaign (p. 71) was tellingly vague:

> The spirit of cooperation was manifest throughout and the necessity for 'social salvation' was constantly voiced, whether the subject happened to be community evangelism, religious education, church comity, international justice and good-will, religious publicity, social service or principles and methods of organization, which were the chief topics considered at the Pittsburgh conference. That the day has forever gone by when social service needs any apology within the church was brought out repeatedly, although this phrase was not always employed when the spirit of service was mentioned.

Discussion and Conclusions

How to interpret the low number of articles is a critical question. MRFM was obviously a major news event both nationally and in individual cities in which it held eight-day events. Magazines and newspapers that ignored it then either must have seen MRFM strictly as a religious event at a time when they weren't covering religious events, or as irrelevant or uninteresting at a time when they had certain definitions and justifications for religion news coverage. Either way, the editors of most to all national, general circulation magazines must have been aware of MRFM and yet felt justified in ignoring it and this was not due to a lack of effort on MRFM's part.39 In any case, minimal coverage of religion by national media is consistent with previous research. On the other hand, most articles that covered MRFM were neutral, balanced or clearly positive, some going so far as to simply turn over their pages to articles written by MRFM leaders or the texts of MRFM speeches, contrary to most research on U.S. media coverage of religion except PK.

MRFM and PK coverage was both similar and different. MRFM coverage was light but steady until near the end, leading up to and immediately after the Conservation Congress in New York City. PK, which offers a continuing series of large stadium meetings around the country, also received very little coverage until it received a critical mass of size and notoriety.[40]

Despite the fact that MRFM apparently was extremely helpful to, and cooperative with, media, and PK originally was not but became so later, coverage of both organizations has been overwhelmingly positive.[41] National print media coverage of MRFM was generally positive apparently for several reasons:

1) Much of the coverage appeared in religion- and/or charity-oriented Protestant religious

publications. These publications should have supported MRFM unless except for any doctrinal differences or ego problems suffered by religious leaders jealous of MRFM.

2) MRFM was the first religious revival to use modern social scientific techniques to research what it wanted to say and how it wanted to help individual cities, and although it was not the first to use some sort of modern management and marketing techniques, MRFM used them more extensively and more efficiently and therefore more effectively, than previous revivals. This meant that journalists easily could give MRFM the benefit of any doubt about what kind of results it would accomplish. Moreover, surely the use of modern theories and methods alone must have impressed journalists. After all, at the time of MRFM, every major industry and profession in America was attempting to become "scientific."[42]

The most impressive modern marketing technique used by MRFM, of course, was its public relations machine; articles written by MRFM leaders, with the sole possible exception of Ellis, were uniformly positive and optimistic. It is important to note that only did MRFM hire professional public relations personnel, but it is quite possible that many MRFM leaders--at least one, Stelzle, certainly was[43]--were themselves sophisticated about public and media relations.

3) It seemed like a good idea to get men more involved in churches and social issues. As Stelzle highlighted in his autobiography (1926) many years later, male attendance in U.S. Protestant churches was low. Of all attendees over the age of 12, only 30.7% were adult men and only 6.2% were boys between ages 12 and 18; males made up less than 37% of total church attendance. More importantly, in 1912, men were the causes of almost all cases of all the social problems, and generally only men, who controlled government, business, education, churches, media and the military, could take action quickly and easily that would significantly treat those social problems.

4) Apparently the fact that MRFM was trying to do good in the country was more important than what it actually accomplished, and perhaps many individuals in the media did not clearly see the gap between rhetoric and reality. MRFM leaders overall, of course, had personal and other interests in perpetuating the notion that MRFM had accomplished much. Stelzle, for instance, should have known by the time he wrote his autobiography (1926), that no evidence existed that MRFM

had any long-term impact. Yet in his memoir he gave Smith credit "for the success of what I regard as one of the most stirring social movements that ever swept this country" (p. 113).

One final similarity between MRFM and PK coverage is that coverage of both--with the exception of entire MRFM speeches printed verbatim--contained very little specific detail about the messages or goals of the organizations. A final difference between MRFM and PK coverage is that although PK coverage has been uniformly positive, and has neither increased nor decreased in the intensity of that positiveness over time, MRFM coverage did become slightly more negative over time as those both skeptical of MRFM's results, and those generally opposed to MRFM, emerged.

The most significant conclusion is this: contrary to much mass communications, political science and religious literature claiming that U.S. media are and probably always have been hostile to religion generally, and to revival-style Protestantism in particular (PK would be included in this category, MRFM possibly not), U.S. media have provided positive--even unskeptical--coverage of religious news, and perhaps more than either media or organized religion would like to admit.

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MIRACLE IN SOUTH AFRICA: A Historical Review of U.S. Magazines' Coverage of the First Heart Transplant

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MIRACLE IN SOUTH AFRICA: A Historical Review of U.S. Magazines' Coverage of the First Heart Transplant

ABSTRACT

Magazine coverage of the first human heart transplant, which was performed in South Africa in December 1967 by Christiaan Barnard, was reviewed. Magazines showed a pro-American slant in their coverage by asserting that luck played a large part in Barnard performing the operation. They also downplayed Barnard's accomplishment by saying he received surgical training in the United States. However, few stories mentioned that Barnard's patients were living much longer than those of American surgeons.

Denise Darvall was in a coma at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa, on December 3, 1967. A recent automobile accident irreparably damaged her brain. A mechanical respirator was the only thing keeping Darvall alive. Doctors knew that within hours she would die. However, Darvall's undamaged, young heart continued to pump furiously.[1]

In a nearby room, Louis Washkansky, another patient, was also dying. Two heart attacks left the Lithuanian immigrant bedridden. His massively enlarged heart beat irregularly. It could not circulate enough blood to feed his body tissues, which were slowly dying from food and oxygen deprivation.[2]

Heart surgeon Christiaan Neethling Barnard went to talk to Ed Darvall, Denise's father, about an unprecedented request: the gift of his daughter's heart to Washkansky.[3] "'We have done our best, and there is nothing more that can be done to help your daughter. There is no hope for her. You can do us and humanity a great favor if you will let us transplant your daughter's heart.' Said Darvall: 'If there's no hope for her, then try to save this man's life.'" He signed the consent form that gave the South African doctors the go-ahead to attempt the world's first human-to-human heart transplantation.[4]

Marais M. Malan, a South African editor, wrote a book titled Heart Transplant. He noted that the operation made Barnard a hero in the United States media. When Washkansky died 18 days after the operation, the media emphasized that it was from pneumonia, not from a heart-related problem.[5] Peter Hawthorne, a South African journalist who covered the transplant, published a book titled The Transplanted Heart. He also found that the media provided positive coverage of Barnard.[6] Life magazine, for example, placed a color picture of Washkansky in his hospital bed on the cover, superseding the originally planned picture of Audrey Hepburn, according to Hawthorne.[7]

Christiaan Barnard, the transplant surgeon, and his editorial collaborator, Curtis Bill Pepper, offered a different perspective of the coverage in a book titled One Life. The operation, they said, caused a media frenzy that was unparalleled in South African history.[8] In a second book titled South Africa: Sharp Dissection, Barnard said reporters stopped at nothing to obtain sensationalized, misleading stories. He never defined what he meant by sensationalized, misleading stories but said that the press "must be prepared to report events and news accurately without creating, with the sole purpose of selling its wares, issues that concentrate on the sensational."[9]

Little has been written about magazine coverage of the first heart transplant.[10] For example, Malan and Hawthorne provided in-depth information about the key players in the event and described the events that took place in detail. However, their books were not intended to review magazines' coverage of the transplant. They were historical accounts of a medical accomplishment. Barnard made the media's aggressive coverage of the heart transplant a focus in his books,[11] but his criticisms of the coverage were generally not supported with the details necessary to determine which reporters were involved. Instead, the reader is to accept his interpretation of the events.[12]

The goals of this paper were to see if Barnard's assertions applied to American magazines via a historical review of articles listed in the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature and the books published about the event as well as analyzing how the magazines covered the transplant. No one has ever tried to pull together information from these disparate sources to determine how magazines covered the transplant.

The hypothesis was that magazines published dramatic stories about the transplant, but they downplayed Barnard's accomplishment through a pro-American slant in the coverage.

The first human-to-human heart transplant had all the elements of a great story: "drama, sentiment, pathos, uncertainty, novelty, heroism, and colourful main characters."[13] In particular, magazines emphasized the drama of the operation, the sentiment of Ed Darvall losing his daughter, the pathos of Denise Darvall dying so violently, the uncertainty of Washkansky's future, the novelty of the operation, the heroism of Washkansky for undergoing the procedure, and the strength of Barnard's character.

Malan called it a "could not miss story" and noted that an American magazine reportedly offered $500,000 for exclusive pictures of the transplantation. However, none were taken. Malan also noted:

> Every word he [Washkansky] uttered, every boiled egg he ate was recorded faithfully by nurses and doctors and reported to the news-hungry public through the press. The heart transplant became the only topic of conversation, both in South Africa and abroad, where banner headlines and pictures of Mr. Washkansky, Miss Darvall and Prof. Barnard carried the story to every corner of the globe.[14]

The headlines and cutlines from the early coverage in magazines supported Malan's point. Time's headline on December 15, 1967, read: "The Ultimate Operation."[15] The cutline under a picture of Washkansky after the operation added: "In its way, equal to Mount Everest."[16] Under a picture of Barnard, Time wrote: "Not the kind of man anyone had to drive."[17] Newsweek's headline on December 18, 1967, stated: "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town."[18]

In addition, Science News asserted that "the drama of human heart transplants has grasped the public's interest."[19] Look called it a "dramatic" attempt to improve the treatment of heart disease.[20] Time called the event "the Cape Town drama." In some ways, its coverage seemed more like a dramatic novel than a news story. For example, Time said the "drama" began when Washkansky was admitted to the hospital with progressive heart failure. "Washkansky was dying, and knew it," it said.[21]

Darvall, in comparison, was the victim, Time said. Her misfortune gave a dying man a chance of survival. The article said:

> Denise Ann Darvall, 25, had no thought of death when she set out with her father and mother to visit friends for Saturday-afternoon tea. In Cape Town's Observatory district, Edward Darvall stopped the car. His wife and daughter started across the street to a bakery to buy a cake when both were struck by a speeding car. Mrs. Darvall was killed instantly. Denise was barely alive, but only barely, on arrival at Groote Schuur Hospital. Her head and brain were almost completely destroyed.[22]

Time's article continued to build on the drama as Barnard asked Washkansky whether he wanted to undergo the first human-to-human heart transplantation. The operation could allow him to live a long, relatively normal life, but there was a 20 percent chance he would die in the operating room. Barnard gave Washkansky two days to think about the operation. Two minutes later, Time said, Washkansky agreed to undergo the operation.[23]

Barnard then became the focus of the drama. The South African doctor worked tediously in the operating room to remove Washkansky's heart and to replace it with Darvall's heart. The new heart, Time said, had to be attached to Washkansky's blood vessels, including the left auricle, the right auricle, the aorta, the pulmonary artery, and the pulmonary veins. Any mistake in attaching the heart would have killed Washkansky.[24]

The 30-member transplant team worked nonstop for four hours to give Washkansky a new heart. Barnard then reached the critical point in the operation: Would the heart, which had not been beating since Darvall died, start circulating the blood? If not, Washkansky was also dead. The first heart transplant would have ended in disaster. Barnard shocked the heart with electrodes, hoping that it would regain a rapid beat. It did. At 5:52 a.m. on a Sunday morning, Barnard yelled, "Christ, it's going to work!"[25]

Washkansky regained consciousness an hour later. After four days, Washkansky waved at photographers, joshed with doctors, and walked a quarter mile to receive radiation treatment, which was used because its immunosuppressive effects made it less likely he would reject the transplant. Washkansky even conducted a radio interview.[26]

Life's coverage also emphasized the drama of the story. However, its approach differed from Time's emphasis on the patients. In contrast, Life directed its coverage almost entirely on Barnard and the difficulties the surgical team faced. The article described how Barnard heroically overcame a series of obstacles. For example, the first obstacle for the surgical team, Life said, was to decide when Darvall was dead so it could remove her heart. The article explained:

> If she were not, their actions would constitute murder, no matter how remote her chance of living or how slight her hold on life. Thus the South African doctors waited until every sign of life in the 25-year-old was gone—not only in her heart but in her lungs and brain as well. Only then did they begin the complex task of transferring the heart of one human being into the body of another.[27]

Life's coverage then focused on the drama that occurred during the second obstacle: the team operating on Darvall to keep her heart alive so it could be transplanted to Washkansky. Because her heart had stopped pumping, the surgeons quickly needed to insert a tube to provide the heart with life-sustaining oxygen and nutrients. Any slight delay would have allowed the heart to deteriorate, making it unsuitable for transplantation. "Operating at top speed, the first team of doctors opened the donor's chest and inserted a tube into the right side of the heart, where blood—bluish from lack of oxygen—enters and is pumped to the lungs to be oxygenated."[28]

The surgeons soon faced the third obstacle. They had to remove both hearts. The surgeons removed Darvall's heart first because if a surgical accident occurred, they could stop the procedure before Washkansky's heart had been excised. The surgeons carefully clamped Darvall's major arteries and began to extract her heart. Washkansky's heart was removed in a similar way, although a piece of his heart was left as a foundation for the new heart.[29]

The fourth obstacle, Life said, was the "monumental task" of connecting Darvall's heart to Washkansky's blood vessels. "The remaining section of the rear wall of the old heart and the corresponding opening in the new one were stitched together, then the arteries and veins," the article said. "To test the stitches, blood was pumped from the body into the new heart." The stitches held. The surgical team shocked the heart, and it started beating. The operation, Life concluded, was "a triumph of modern surgery."[30]

Newsweek's December 18, 1967, article titled "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town" covered the science fiction angle of the transplantation. In fact, Newsweek's lead quoted Washkansky as saying, "I am a new Frankenstein."[31] The article added:

> The gallows humor of the remark was appropriate: the sturdy, 170-pound Washkansky had been to the edge of death—indeed over the line—and had been brought back to life by perhaps the most remarkable bit of surgical virtuosity in the history of medicine. . . . All last week, the heart of the 25-year-old Anglican bank clerk pumped the life's blood of a 55-year-old Jewish grocer. Lurid fiction had become scientific fact and the distinctions between life and death had become blurred and rearranged.[32]

The magazine also maintained that the operation marked a new era in medicine, the transplantation age, where many people would live to be 100 years old and doctors would play God. However, Newsweek questioned whether there would be negative consequences of this era. Would doctors hasten a patient's death to transplant his or her organs? How would you know if the patient was really dead?

Who would decide? A computer? The government?[33] Newsweek's coverage quoted an anonymous public health official in Washington saying: "I have a horrible vision of ghouls hovering over an accident victim with long knives unsheathed, waiting to take out his organs as soon as he is pronounced dead."[34]

U.S. News & World Report offered only 10 paragraphs of coverage to the first human-to-human heart transplantation. However, the magazine's coverage was also highly positive, as demonstrated by the headline "A History-making Operation." U.S. News & World Report, like Life, emphasized the lifesaving work of Barnard's 30-person team.[35] Science News added: "Simply connecting up as complicated a piece of plumbing as the human heart is a prodigious mechanical feat."[36] It also credited Barnard for his "pioneering efforts" and "historic" operation.[37]

Magazines maintained their interest in Washkansky as he began his rehabilitation. They even published the most trivial details about his recovery. "The 55-year-old grocer dined on steak and eggs, asked for a glass of beer (and was turned down), enjoyed the sunshine on a balcony outside his room at Cape Town's Groote Schuur Hospital, and made plans for a homecoming party before Christmas."[38] Newsweek added that Washkansky had recovered enough to yell at the media. "What am I," he growled at a photographer, "a freak?"[39]

The magazines also provided extensive coverage when his condition deteriorated 13 days after the operation. Doctors discovered a dramatic rise in his white blood cell count. A chest X-ray revealed a shadow in the lungs, the classic sign of pneumonia.[40] The article noted the hospital's quick response:

> Hurriedly breaking off a television interview, Dr. Christian Barnard, the 44-year-old surgeon who had headed the transplant team, rushed through the hospital to Washkansky's bedside. He identified the attacking organism as pneumococcal pneumonia, the most common form of the lung ailment, and said both lungs were affected. Twenty million units of penicillin were

> administered immediately in intravenous doses. Barnard was clearly worried.[41]

Time noted that although the hospital listed his condition as satisfactory, the pneumonia could be fatal in a diabetic patient with a heart transplant.[42]

Finally, Time[43] and Newsweek[44] offered in-depth reporting on Washkansky's death from double pneumonia the following week. Overall, there were two important themes in the magazine stories about his death.

First, they emphasized that it was not Barnard's fault that the patient died. Time said: "The underlying cause of the process that ended in death was clouded and likely to become the subject of medical dispute, but one thing was clear: it was not the failure of the transplanted heart. To the last, that organ functioned with a surprisingly strong and regular beat."[45] Newsweek added: "Pathologists found evidence of pneumonia in both lungs, but no signs that the heart was being rejected. Indeed, the new heart functioned until death."[46]

The second theme was the promise—but sad ending—resulting from the first human-to-human heart transplant. Newsweek, for example, pointed out that information gained from the operation would help future patients. "And though he [Washkansky] died late last week, the dramatic operation remained a surgical landmark against which all future transplant surgery will be measured." Moreover, Newsweek's article quoted an anonymous member of the surgical team as saying, "We climbed Everest. Next time, we will know how to get down."[47]

Science News also emphasized that the transplant was "a success" and "a great step forward." Washkansky's immune system had not rejected the heart, and the transplant had improved his quality of life. "Until the last five minutes of Washkansky's life, the young heart of Denise Darval, replacing his own, continued to beat strongly. His improved circulation had improved other body functions and lessened the swelling in his legs and liver, which had resulted from the poor pumping of his own failing heart."[48]

On the other hand, Time reminded its readers of the plight of Ed Darvall, the father of the first heart donor. "After Washkansky died, the man who had made the transplant possible was despondent. Said Edward Darvall: 'There was at least part of my daughter alive, and now it's all gone. I feel empty.'"[49]

Despite the generally positive coverage about the first heart transplant, magazines downplayed Barnard's accomplishment through a pro-American slant in their coverage in four ways. First, they asserted that luck played a large part in the team performing the first operation. Time said:

> For weeks and months and even years, surgical teams at more than 20 medical centers around the world have been standing ready to make the first transplant of a heart from one human being to another. What they have been waiting for is the simultaneous arrival of two patients with compatible blood types—one doomed to die of some disease that has not involved his heart and a second doomed to die of irreversible heart disease.[50]

Time added that an American surgeon, Doctor James D. Hardy at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, could have performed the operation years before Barnard. On three occasions, it said, Hardy had patients dying of brain injuries who could have donated hearts, but there were no recipients. Furthermore, Hardy twice had patients with advanced heart disease but no donors. In fact, Hardy transplanted a chimpanzee's heart into one of the dying patients three years before Barnard's operation. But the small ape's heart could not support the circulation and failed within two hours.[51]

Science News also emphasized how Hardy's misfortune prevented him from performing the first human heart transplant. It said:

> But Dr. Hardy was beset by the problems of timing the recipient's crisis with death of a suitable donor. . . . Time and fate cooperated a bit in Cape Town. Grocer Washkansky lay a month in Groote Schuur Hospital with no chance that his badly fibrosed heart would allow him to survive. His only hope was transplantation. Finally a young women, Denise Darvall, was brought in mortally injured after being hit by a car.[52]

Newsweek[53] and *Science News*[54] also noted that other American surgeons had been prepared to perform the procedure, including Doctors David Blumenstock of the Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown, New York, William Likoff of the Philadelphia's Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital, Richard Lower of the Medical College of Virginia, and Adrian Kantrowitz of the Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, New York.

The second way in which magazines downplayed Barnard's accomplishment was by saying American physicians had pioneered the procedure.[55] For example, *Science News* said that American surgeons had known the mechanics of performing the heart transplant for at least 10 years. "But doctors in the United States have not been willing to take the chance."[56] In addition, *Newsweek* said:

> The ground-breaking experimentation that led to last week's operation was performed in 1960 by Dr. Norman E. Shumway of Stanford Medical Center in Palo Alto, Calif. . . . Just three weeks ago, the graying 44-year-old Shumway predicted: 'We are on the verge of clinical application.' Since he had developed the 'atrial stump' technique of attachment, many surgeons expected that he would be the first to use it in a human being.[57]

Business Week added: "Not only Barnard was ready to try the revolutionary operation. Earlier, Dr. Norman E. Shumway of Stanford University Medical School had said he was only waiting for a patient; the technology and the technique were perfected. . . ."[58] In contrast, *Science News* argued that Lower of the Medical College of Virginia deserved to be the pioneering surgeon in human heart transplantation.

He had "been ready for months to perform a heart transplant. So far he has lacked the right combination of donor and recipient."[59]

In addition, Saturday Review asserted that Barnard had done nothing to develop the procedure. It noted that he had never published any papers about heart transplant research. Moreover, he never performed heart transplants on experimental animals in the United States.[60]

Finally, an article in Saturday Review compared the work of Shumway and Barnard. "Dr. Barnard transplanted Mr. Washkansky's heart without ever having published a scientific paper on his experimental procedures. Dr. Shumway described his prior research with animals in numerous papers spread over a decade."[61]

The third way in which magazines downplayed Barnard's accomplishment was by saying he received surgical training in the United States. Saturday Review noted that Barnard, who was already licensed as a physician in South Africa, went to the University of Minnesota for postgraduate study.[62] Newsweek and Time said that Barnard attended the University of Minnesota in the mid-1950s, about ten years before he performed the transplant, for his Master of Science and Ph.D. degrees in surgery.[63]

Business Week even maintained the basic research and experimental surgery training that Barnard received at the University of Minnesota allowed him to perform the transplant. It pointed out: "From the public's viewpoint, it may have seemed that the state of the art in heart surgery had taken a sudden leap forward over night. But actually the Cape Town operation can be traced to a long series of developments in surgical science over the last 15 years—many of them in the U.S., and many of them at the University of Minnesota."[64]

Time agreed that Barnard would not have performed the operation without his American surgical training. It added: "In fact, he [Barnard] has learned more from former colleagues in the U.S. and from keeping up with their research."[65]

In addition, several magazines suggested that Barnard could not have performed the procedure without a visit to the research laboratory of Richard Lower of the Medical College of Virginia. For example, Business Week asserted that Lower taught Barnard the "history-making" technology during a visit to the United States in 1964.[66] "Dr. Barnard worked at the Medical College of Virginia for three and a half months last winter. Dr. Lower says the South African surgeon studied techniques of transplant surgery and the management of transplant cases post-operatively."[67]

Finally, the fourth way in which magazines downplayed Barnard's accomplishment was by emphasizing that it was performed in a country with segregated racial policies. South Africa's apartheid policy was opposed by most of the world. Thus, it was viewed as a renegade nation, and many stories questioned how a medical miracle could occur there.

> I often wonder whether there would have been so much controversy and so many issues raised about the morality and legality of heart transplantation had the first operation been performed in the United States or Britain. The feeling seems to be that nothing good can come from South Africa, and that if something from South Africa appears to be good on the surface, then there must be an ulterior motive.[68]

The issue of South Africa's racial policies surfaced in the December 15, 1967, issue of Time and the December 18, 1967, issue of Newsweek,[69] when a 10-year-old colored boy, Jonathan Van Wyk, received a kidney from Denise Darvall. However, the team deflected the criticism by noting that black South Africans were benefiting from the transplantation program. Marius Barnard, a member of the transplant team and Christiaan's brother, was quoted in Newsweek as saying: "What I am most thrilled about as a South African is that we could use the heart of an Anglican girl to put into the body of a Jewish gentleman and a kidney into a colored child."[70]

However, South Africa's racial policies became the focus of magazine coverage after Barnard's second heart transplant. The second heart transplant recipient was a 58-year-old white man, Philip Blaiberg. The donor was a 24-year-old colored man, Clive Haupt.[71] "In South Africa, more than surgery was involved in the transplant. In this country, laws against racial mixing are very strict, yet Dr. Blaiberg, a white man, was given the heart of a 'colored'—partly Negro—donor."[72] The Saturday Evening Post added: "Dr. Barnard fully acknowledged that when he provided one of his patients with the heart of a mulatto who could not have eaten in the same restaurant, lived in the same building, or even occupied the same hospital ward as the white man whose life he saved."[73] Hawthorne added that the doctors were forced to answer pointed questions about South Africa's racial policies, which few of them supported.[74] In addition, Malan said that almost all publications stressed the fact that a coloured man's heart had been given to a white man.[75]

Time also emphasized the race angle of the story. "Dr. Barnard asked Blaiberg whether he would object to receiving a Colored man's heart. No, replied the desperate patient—who, like Washkansky, happened to be Jewish."[76] Newsweek's version differed slightly. "In the meantime, Blaiberg was asked if he would accept a heart from a colored man. 'Yes,' he whispered."[77]

Ebony, a magazine primarily targeted at blacks, offered some of the best coverage of this point. It credited Barnard for his marvelous heart transplantation but did not blame him for South Africa's racial policies.[78] Furthermore, it said:

> If Dr. Blaiberg completely recovers and again walks the streets of Cape Town, a most ironic situation will ensue. Clive Haupt's heart will ride in the uncrowded train coaches marked 'For Whites Only' instead of in the crowded ones reserved for blacks. It will pump extra hard to circulate the blood needed for a game of tennis where the only blacks are those who might pull heavy rollers to smooth the courts. It will enter fine restaurants, attend theaters and concerts and live in a decent home instead of in the tough slums where Haupt grew up. Haupt's heart will go literally to hundreds of places where Haupt

> himself, could not go because his skin was a little darker than that of Blaiberg.[79]

In conclusion, the first goal of this paper was to see if Barnard's assertions about sensationalized media coverage of heart transplantation applied to American magazines. He never defined what he meant by sensationalized, misleading stories, but said that the press "must be prepared to report events and news accurately without creating, with the sole purpose of selling its wares, issues that concentrate on the sensational."[80]

Overall, the magazine stories appeared to be balanced, factually accurate, yet dramatic. Thus, it seemed unlikely that Barnard's comments were directed at American magazines. In fact, most of the evidence suggested that Barnard was referring to the South African and British press. A South African newspaper, for example, criticized Groote Schuur Hospital for not paying the funeral expenses for a heart donor. Barnard felt this newspaper's coverage was sensationalistic and inappropriate. In addition, during a lecture by Barnard at Cambridge University, a British newspaper provided prominent coverage to his quip about doing some serious drinking. He felt that the reporter was acting maliciously by printing the quote. However, these cases were unusual because Barnard generally did not provide the details necessary to determine which reporters were involved in the contentious coverage.[81]

The second goal of the paper was to analyze how the magazines covered the first human heart transplant. As the hypothesis suggested, magazines emphasized the drama of the first transplant. Science News proclaimed that "the drama of human heart transplants has grasped the public's interest."[82] Look called it a "dramatic" attempt to improve the treatment of heart disease.[83] Time called the event "the Cape Town drama."[84]

However, the magazines showed a noticeable pro-American slant in their coverage in four ways. First, they asserted that luck played a large part in Barnard's team performing the first operation. Second, they said American physicians, not Barnard, had pioneered the procedure. Third, magazines downplayed Barnard's accomplishment by saying he received surgical and transplant training in the United States. Finally, the stories denigrated Barnard by saying the transplant should not have been performed in South Africa, a country whose segregated racial policies were opposed by most of the world.

Saturday Evening Post, for example, headlined its editorial on the transplant: "Frankenstein in South Africa."[85] Saturday Review called the operation an unethical "experiment" and "optimistic ballyhoo."[86] The article also asserted that Barnard had done nothing to develop the procedure. It noted that he had never published any papers about heart transplant research. Moreover, he never performed heart transplants on experimental animals in the United States.[87]

However, this criticism about Barnard not performing heart transplants on experimental animals in the United States was extremely misleading. Barnard's team completed 50 heart transplants in dogs in South Africa over the previous three years.[88] Furthermore, the magazines failed to mention that Barnard's patients were surviving much better than the patients of American surgeons. Shumway's first three patients lived 15, 3, and 46 days, compared with 18, 593, and 621 for Barnard.[89] Philip Blaiberg, Barnard's second patient, did so well that he went swimming in the surf, drove his car through Cape Town traffic, and wrote his autobiography, "Looking at My Heart."[90]

Time was one of the few magazines to credit Barnard for his patients doing well. For example, it wrote an in-depth article on how American surgeons traveled to Cape Town in July 1968 to learn from the South African surgeon. Time quoted Brooklyn surgeon Adrian Kantrowitz as saying: "Chris Barnard has been doing it better than all of us—that's why we are here."[91]

These findings were the most revealing part of the research. The heart transplant was the medical equivalent of the Sputnik launch: It shocked the American public. Few could believe that this pioneering procedure had been performed in South Africa. Thus, the magazines had to explain why "the world's first heart transplant was performed without fanfare by little-known surgeons in an obscure hospital in Cape Town."[92] Malan may have summed it up best when he said:

> In a country like the United States, where scientific research has almost become a way of life, enormous sums of money are available and the best brains of the western world are concentrated, it is easy to think big. So enormous is the bulk of research programe in the United States, in which medicine and space research play the major roles, that hardly a day passes without the announcement of some important discovery. Little wonder then that everyone expected that the first heart transplant operation would be performed in that country. . . . Certainly no one expected that an obscure team in a country with limited research facilities and less research funds was anywhere near a surgical achievement which the medical giants of the world were still considering with something approaching awe.[93]

ENDNOTES

[1] Marais M. Malan, Heart Transplant (Johannesburg, South Africa: Voortrekkerpers Ltd., 1968), 15.

[2] Malan, Heart Transplant, 18.

[3] Groote Schuur Hospital had been prepared to perform a heart transplant on Washkansky for one month. Thus, when a member of the transplant team went off duty, the hospital required that he or she leave a telephone number with the sister in charge in case a potential donor was found. (Malan, Heart Transplant, 18-9).

[4] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 15 December 1967, 64.

[5] Malan, Heart Transplant, 89.

[6] Peter Hawthorne, The Transplanted Heart (Johannesburg, South Africa: Hugh Keartland Publishers, 1968), 112.

[7] Hawthorne, The Transplanted Heart, 113.

[8] Christiaan Barnard and Curtis Bill Pepper, One Life, (Toronto: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 330.

[9] Chris Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection (New York: Books in Focus, Inc., 1977), 81, 102.

[10] The literature review and search of computerized databases failed to identify any medical or science journalism textbooks that focused on how reporters covered the transplant.

[11] "Literally within hours of the last suture being tied, the routine of Groote Schuur Hospital and the lives of all concerned with the operation were disrupted by an influx of press, television and radio men that was unprecedented in the history of South Africa. They came from every major news network in the Western world, bringing with them all the sophisticated technology of contemporary mass communication. Groote Schuur was totally unprepared for this influx, and for several days something close to chaos prevailed. In fact, it became necessary to seek police

intervention to secure the welfare of the recipient and the personal privacy of many of the medical and nursing staff" (Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection, 81).

[12] "We had blocked off the ward in an effort to keep them out, but throughout that day and all that followed they were to infiltrate in every way possible—masquerading as doctors and orderlies and even climbing trees outside the hospital window" (Barnard and Pepper, One Life, 330); Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection, 81.

[13] Malan, Heart Transplant, 40.

[14] Malan, Heart Transplant, 46-7, 122-3.

[15] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[16] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[17] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 71.

[18] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 18 December 1967, 86.

[19] "Kidneys lead the field." Science News, 2 March 1968, 214.

[20] "Heart Transplants are not Enough." Look, 16 April 1968, 92.

[21] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[22] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[23] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[24] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[25] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 65; Malan, Heart Transplant, 14.

[26] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 65.

[27] "'It was a nice beat, you know'," Life, 15 December 1967, 27.

[28] "'It was a nice beat, you know'," Life, 27.

[29] "'It was a nice beat, you know'," Life, 27.

[30] "'It was a nice beat, you know'," Life, 27.

[31] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 86.

[32] The anonymous public health official was never identified ("The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 86).

[33] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 86.

[34] "When are you really dead?" Newsweek, 18 December 1967, 87.

[35] "A History-making Operation." U.S. News & World Report, 18 December 1967, 63.

[36] "A Spate of Heart Transplants." Science News, 20 January 1968, 59.

[37] "A plea for a transplant moratorium." Science News, 16 March 1968, 256.

[38] "Watching and Learning." Newsweek, 22 December 1967, 36.

[39] "Watching and Learning." Newsweek, 41.

[40] "Watching and Learning." Newsweek, 41.

[41] The magazine used a different spelling for Barnard's first name ("Watching and Learning," Newsweek, 41).

[42] "Progress, Then a Setback." Time, 22 December 1967, 41.

[43] "End & Beginning." Time, 29 December 1967, 32.

[44] "'We Climbed Everest.'" Newsweek, 1 January 1968, 52.

[45] The anonymous member of the surgical team was never identified ("End & Beginning," Time, 32).

[46] "'We Climbed Everest.'" Newsweek, 52.

[47] "'We Climbed Everest.'" Newsweek, 52.

[48] The story's author seems to have misspelled Darvall's name. All other magazine articles and books spelled it "Darvall" not "Darval." ("Balancing the Drug Dosage," Science News, 6 January 1968, 7).

[49] Edward Darvall made this comment even though one of his daughter's kidneys was functioning well for 10-year-old Jonathan Van Wyk ("End & Beginning," Time, 32).

[50] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[51] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 71.

[52] The article contained a typographical mistake. It should have been "woman" and not "women." ("A Spate of Heart Transplants," Science News, 60).

[53] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 89.

[54] "First human hearts transplanted," Science News, 16 December 1967, 581.

[55] "Transplanting the Heart." Saturday Review, 6 January 1968, 98; Malan, Heart Transplant, 127.

[56] "First human hearts transplanted," Science News, 581.

[57] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 89.

[58] The atrial stump technique involved leaving part of Washkansky's heart to make it easier to attach the donor heart. ("Fertile seedbed of transplant surgery." Business Week, 6 January 1968, 98.)

[59] It is more likely that other surgeons did not want to perform the first transplant because of the publicity and the difficult ethical issues. If luck played such a large role in Barnard performing the transplant—because the donor and recipient happened to die at the same time—why did two American teams perform transplants within weeks of the operation. One team performed two transplants within the following month. ("A Spate of Heart Transplants." Science News, 59.)

[60] "Transplanting the Heart." Saturday Review, 98.

[61] "A Realistic Look at Heart Transplants." Saturday Review, 3 February 1968, 53.

[62] "A Realistic Look at Heart Transplants." Saturday Review, 54.

[63] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 87; "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 72; "Fascinations & Lessons," Time, 19 January 1968, 50; "Were Transplants Premature?" Time, 15 March 1968, 66.

[64] "Fertile seedbed of transplant surgery." Business Week, 98, 100.

[65] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 72.

[66] "Fertile seedbed of transplant surgery." Business Week, 98.

[67] "A Spate of Heart Transplants." Science News, 59.

[68] Barnard opposed apartheid and insisted that all transplantation patients receive the same care from the same nurses and the same doctors in the same operating

rooms. However, black patients were cared for in separate wards. (Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection, 46, 97; Hawthorne, The Transplanted Heart, 84).

[69] The term "colored" or "coloured" was used in South Africa to identify someone of mixed racial origin ("The Ultimate Operation," Time, 66; "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 88).

[70] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 88.

[71] "Cape Town's Second." Time, 12 January 1968, 38; Malan, Heart Transplant, 113.

[72] "New Heart For Old—Another 'Transplant.'" U.S. News & World Report, 15 January 1968, 12; Hawthorne, The Transplanted Heart, 181.

[73] "Frankenstein in South Africa." Saturday Evening Post, 10 February 1968, 72.

[74] Hawthorne, The Transplanted Heart, 185.

[75] Malan, Heart Transplant, 40.

[76] "Cape Town's Second." Time, 38.

[77] "Surgery and Show Biz." Newsweek, 15 January 1968, 49.

[78] "The Telltale Heart." Ebony, March 1968, 118.

[79] "The Telltale Heart." Ebony, 118.

[80] Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection, 102.

[81] The magazine stories did not contain any quotes from Barnard criticizing the coverage. In fact, he leveled most of his criticisms of the press in a 1977 book titled South Africa: Sharp Dissection. It seemed likely that much of Barnard's criticism was directed at the South African and British press. Barnard said he was very disturbed by the local press's coverage of his first double transplant, where he left the diseased heart in place and transplanted a second heart into another section of the chest. "It was briefly mentioned in our local press, but the aspect that received much greater publicity was the fact that we used the heart of a 13-year-old Coloured girl and that the hospital authorities refused to provide the money to cover the cost of her burial. This was written up in great detail: the plight of the family and the alleged lack of

sympathy on the part of hospital authorities and the doctors" (Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection, 84-85). In addition, Barnard criticized the British press for its coverage of his lecture at Cambridge University. "As it happened, it was my birthday, November 8, and they had discovered this, for when I got off the train they said they knew it was my birthday and they would like to invite me to have a drink with them before the lecture. I accepted but first attended a short press conference where I answered several questions, discussed heart transplantation and posed for press photographs. At the conclusion I turned to the students and said jocularly, 'Come on, now, let's get down to some serious drinking!' In the local press the next morning there was nothing whatsoever about my discussion on heart transplantation. The only reference to my visit was that after arriving in Cambridge and completing the formalities, Professor Barnard turned to the students and said, 'Let's get down to some serious drinking'" (Barnard, South Africa: Sharp Dissection, 88).

[82] "Kidneys lead the field." Science News, 214.

[83] "Heart Transplants are not Enough." Look, 92.

[84] "The Ultimate Operation," Time, 64.

[85] "Frankenstein in South Africa." Saturday Evening Post, 72.

[86] "A Realistic Look at Heart Transplants." Saturday Review, 54.

[87] "Transplanting the Heart." Saturday Review, 98.

[88] "The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town," Newsweek, 87.

[89] C. N. Barnard, "The first heart transplant — background and circumstances," *South African Medical Journal* 85 (September 1995) : 924.

[90] "Heartening." Newsweek, 25 November 1968.

[91] "Summit for the Heart." Time, 26 July 1968.

[92] "Surgery and Show Biz." Newsweek, 49.

[93] Malan, Heart Transplant, 71, 73.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

"A History-making Operation." U.S. News & World Report, 18 December 1967, 63.

This article addressed the first heart transplant from the view of the surgical team. However, it offered little new information about the event.

"A plea for a transplant moratorium." Science News, 16 March 1968, 256.

The article provided useful information on the controversy in the medical community after most of the early heart transplant patients died. In fact, many physicians supported a moratorium on heart transplants until more research on tissue rejection was completed.

"A Realistic Look at Heart Transplants." Saturday Review, 3 February 1968, 53-8.

The author offered a critical review of the transplant after the first patient's death. He opposed Barnard performing the first procedure and questioned his transplant expertise.

"A Spate of Heart Transplants." Science News, 20 January 1968, 59-60.

The article provided useful information on the heart transplantation race that ensued after Barnard's procedure. Surgical groups throughout the world were performing the procedure; however, some lacked extensive training.

"Balancing the Drug Dosage." Science News, 6 January 1968, 7-8.

The article described the difficulty that surgeons would have in preventing patients from rejecting heart transplants. Moreover, it noted that if too many anti-rejection drugs were provided, the patient could die of an infection.

Barnard, Chris. South Africa: Sharp Dissection. New York, NY: Books in Focus, Inc, 1977.

This book provided a good overview of the events surrounding the first heart transplant. The author also went in-depth about his views on the negative role the media play in society. However, he gave few details to substantiate his claims about unethical media behavior, such as the reporter involved and the publication he or she worked for.

Barnard, Christiaan and Curtis Bill Pepper. One Life. Toronto: The Macmillan Company, 1970.

The authors provided an excellent review of Barnard's life. They also offered in-depth coverage of the first transplant. However, the book gave little new information on the media coverage of the event.

Barnard, C. N. "The first heart transplant — background and circumstances," *South African Medical Journal* 85 (September 1995) : 924-6.

The author provided in-depth information about the circumstances leading to the first human heart transplant. He also noted that the patients of the South African transplant team survived much better than the patients of an American team.

"Cape Town's Second." Time, 12 January 1968, 38-9.

The article offered an in-depth description of the events surrounding the second heart transplant. It also gave the reader a good understanding of how the operation was performed.

"End & Beginning." Time, 29 December 1967, 32.

The article offered a detailed description of the patient's death from double pneumonia and what the transplant team had learned from the operation. It complemented the magazine's earlier coverage.

"Fascinations & Lessons." Time, 19 January 1968, 50-1.

The article examined the outcomes of the early heart transplant patients and questioned whether surgeons had rushed to perform the procedure without the necessary experience.

"Fertile seedbed of transplant surgery." Business Week, 6 January 1968, 98-100.

The author reviewed Barnard's training in the United States and concluded that this experience was crucial to him performing the first heart transplant.

"First human hearts transplanted." Science News, 16 December 1967, 581.

The article emphasized the likelihood of Washkansky's body rejecting the transplant. It also addressed the technical issue of Washkansky receiving a smaller female heart.

"Frankenstein in South Africa." Saturday Evening Post, 10 February 1968, 72.

The editorial drew a comparison between Barnard's accomplishment and that of Doctor Frankenstein. It also pointed out that technological advances can occur in repressive countries.

Hawthorne, P. The Transplanted Heart. Johannesburg, South Africa: Hugh Keartland Publishers, 1968.

The author found that the U.S. media provided highly positive coverage of Barnard. It also gave the reader a good understanding of how the operation was performed. In addition, he described the events that took place in detail. However, his book was not intended to review U.S. magazines' coverage of the transplant.

"Heartening." Newsweek, 25 November 1968, 125-6.

The article provided an in-depth look at human heart transplantation. It maintained that the procedure was still experimental, although some patients had had dramatic recoveries.

"Heart Transplants are not Enough." Look, 16 April 1968, 92.

The article provided a critical look at human heart transplantation. It maintained that heart transplants offer little hope to most patients with advanced heart disease.

"'It was a nice beat, you know.'" Life, 15 December 1967, 27.

This article gave a detailed report on the first heart transplant from the perspective of the surgical team. It also described the technical features of the operation.

"Kidneys lead the field." Science News, 2 March 1968, 214.

The article provided useful information on the state of heart, liver, spleen, lung, pituitary, and adrenal gland transplants. It noted that kidney transplantation probably has advanced more than other fields.

Malan, M. Heart Transplant. Johannesburg, South Africa: Voortrekkerpers Ltd., 1968.

The author provided an in-depth review of the key players in the first heart transplant: Barnard, Darvall, and Washkansky. In addition, he described the events that took place in detail. However, his book was not intended to review U.S. magazines' coverage of the transplant. Thus, there was only limited information about this angle.

"New Heart For Old—Another 'Transplant.'" U.S. News & World Report, 15 January 1968,12.

The article provided a useful description of Barnard's second heart transplant. It also addressed race relations in South Africa, which became a topic of discussion when the donor was black and the recipient was white.

"Progress, Then a Setback." Time, 22 December 1967, 41.

This article was a follow-up to Time's earlier coverage. It provided good information on the patient's fight with double pneumonia.

"Summit for the Heart." Time, 26 July 1968, 49-50.

This article described how American surgeons traveled to South Africa in July 1968 to learn heart transplantation techniques from Chris Barnard. The reason that the surgeons went there was because Barnard's patients were surviving much longer than the patients of American surgeons.

"Surgery and Show Biz." Newsweek, 15 January 1968, 49.

The article noted that Barnard had become a media celebrity. It also offered insight into the second heart transplant where the donor was black and the recipient was white.

"The Heart: Miracle in Cape Town." Newsweek, 18 December 1967, 86-90.

This article gave a detailed report on the first heart transplant. It also described the technical features of the operation as well as the ethical-religious issues.

"The Telltale Heart." Ebony, March 1968, 118-9.

The article addressed the irony that black South Africans were good enough to serve as organ donors but not good enough to eat in the same restaurants as whites.

"The Ultimate Operation." Time, 15 December 1967, 64-71.

This article also provided an in-depth report on the first heart transplant. It addressed how the surgeons performed the operation and noted that the procedure was developed in the United States.

"Transplanting the Heart." Saturday Review, 6 January 1968, 98-101.

The author offered a provocative look at the first transplant and asked two tough questions. Should the procedure have been done? Should Barnard have been the one to do it?

"Watching and Learning." Newsweek, 22 December 1967, 36.

This article was a follow-up to Newsweek's earlier coverage. It provided good information on the patient's fight with double pneumonia.

"'We Climbed Everest.'" Newsweek, 1 January 1968, 52.

The article offered a detailed description of the patient's death from double pneumonia and what the transplant team had learned from the operation.

"Were Transplants Premature?" Time, 15 March 1968, 66.

The article questioned whether surgeons had rushed to perform the procedure without the necessary experience.

"When are you really dead?" Newsweek, 18 December 1967, 87.

This article addressed the ethical and legal issues involved in transplantation. It noted that there was some controversy in defining death.

Physiographic Aggragation and Segmentation: Inclusion of Visually-Detected Physically Impaired Role Models in Advertisements

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Physiographic Aggragation and Segmentation: Inclusion of Visually-Detected Physically Impaired Role Models in Advertisements

ABSTRACT

This is an intensive case study of a physically handicapped person. The research develops a personal market profile of the subject to identify him as a prospect and target market for major advertisers. The researchers then develop data from the subject's actual media consumption to see if any phsically impaired models reflect this target market of one in the advertisements.

The research results are disappointing and do not illustrate the inclusion of visually-detected physically impaired models in current advertising.

INTRODUCTION OF STUDY

This study examines how the visually-detected physically impaired population is portrayed in American mass media advertising.

The topic of portraying the physically impaired population in a positive and beneficial manner is current news in America. In the past year, two news stories have come to the forefront about the portrayal of physically impaired persons in life and the media. Handicapped professional golfer Casey Martin needed the courts to gain access to the Professional Golfers' Association tournaments (Chambers, 1998; Sandomir, 1998). The Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial created many debates on whether the popular president should be portrayed in his physically impaired condition at the memorial. Roosevelt's sculpture shows him sitting down with a cape draped over his legs and his wheelchair. Many physically impaired Americans were upset when the new sculpture did not openly reveal his physical impairment. Detractors feel the memorial does not celebrate his triumph over adversity (Means, 1997).

But what about physiographically aggragating then segmenting a market of consumers and identifying them in advertisments as models? Many research studies attest to the financial value and social successes of including ethnic minorities as models in advertisments (MaCaulay, 1996; Fong, 1996; Pollock, 1997). Generally, advertisers are encouraged to portray their targeted prospects as model(s) within their advertisements. Many times, the graphic elements of an advertisement depict the model(s) interacting with the product. This picture of interaction creates a sense of interest, and hopefully, desire on the part of the prospect (Arens, 1994).

It is reasonable to assume a physically impaired person should be a good prospect for many if not most of the products advertised (Goerne, 1992). Physically impaired people should be graphically represented within some advertisements as models, especially when they are prospects (ibid, 1992).

This inclusion of physically impaired people can also have a positive social affect (Morrison, 1987). People, of today's society, view the physically impaired as being different from themselves. They are seen as being helpless or unable to participate in normal activities by some (Belgrave, 1984).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Advertisers are not acting in a socially responsible manner. They are not including visually-detected physically-impaired models in their print and broadcast advertisements. Advertisers will miss potential sales to this physiographically segmented market as impaired people cultivate a segmented culture because they are not included as part of the general market.

THE PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is establish an intensive case study of a physically impaired research subject to see if advertisers include him in their advertisements as part of their target market. We study his product consumption patterns, develop a financial profile and collect data about his media consumption to see if he qualifies as part of the target market. Finally, we determine how effectively and accurately advertising directed to him reflects his lifestyle. We have not found a similar study in our literature search.

RESEARCH TERMS

Typically marketers use several terms to describe aggregated market segments. These consumer segment descriptors are: **geographic** which give markets defined physical location and dimension; **demographic** which includes quantifiable descriptor variables like: gender, age, ethnicity, education, occupation, income, marital status, dependent; **behavioristic** segmentation which measures purchase occasion, benefits desired, user status and user rate; and **psychographic** segmentation which includes a prospect's values, attitudes and lifestyles (Arens, 1996). This research is premised on using **"physiographic"** segmentation which describe a prospect's physical attributes as they do or do not relate to their patterns of adoption and consumption.

Three terms are used interchangeably in general literature when describing persons with life style afflictions. The World Health Organization clarifies the difference between their meanings thusly. **Impairment** refers to having any limb, organ or mechanism of the body that is defective or missing. **Disability** refers to the lack of function that results directly from the impairment. **Handicap** refers to the limitations on normal activity that result from the disability (McNeill, 1988, p.26). Based on these terms, we are researching the utilization of models with visually-detected physical disabilities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses secondary and primary data. Initially, secondary data was retrieved from the popular press, business press and academic journals across several areas of research to get an academic grounding for this study.

First Phase of Primary Research

Primary data was collected with two different methodologies for phase one of the study.

An introspective interview is an account planning research technique by the research subject on themself performed (Fortini-Campbell, 1992). The research subject is physically impaired and gives a first person perspective on living with a disability. The information collected includes a demographic profile, a media consumption diary, behavioristic patterns of purchase and trends about brand loyalty, a psychographic profile of values, attitudes and lifestyle, and a physiographic description were developed.

The second step of phase one data collection was organizing, encoding and analyzing the media which was collected and recorded and kept according to the media diary kept by the research subject. The subject video-taped all of his television viewing, kept all of his mail, newspapers and magazines as data for analysis. The data was then reviewed as a content analysis to measure and evaluate the inclusion of the physically impaired models in the print and broadcast media.

It is felt measuring the inclusion of physically impaired models against the actual media consumed by a physically impaired member of the audience is the best measure of success for advertisers.

This study does not include physical impairment from age as a positive finding. When a physically impaired model was depicted in the advertising, the data was recorded using a standard form developed for the study.

Second Phase

This study's first phase of findings are confirmed by an auxilary study conducted independently from the first phase of the study.

The second phase of this study took a random week of NBC primetime network television programming between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. NBC is the number one rated network during this time frame. It was felt this auxiliary data could confirm or negate the findings of the first phase of this research. Burnett and Paul (1996) affirm television and other mass media are most convenient and preferred by the physically handicapped market segment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Size of Physiologically Impaired Market Segment

Articles and research studies quoted the number of disabled Americans at 43 million as of 1992. There were approximately 50 million people age three years and older with a disability in 1994 and the United States' population was 260,660,000 (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1996).

That is an increase of 7 million people in two years. This suggests the number of recognized disabled Americans is increasing and a viable physiographic market aggrgation and segmentation segmentation. This segment of the population represents almost 20 percent of the total United States population.

Disabled persons are aggregating into their own culture (Nelson, 1994; Iwakuma, 1997; John, 1997). This growing socialization process supports physiographic segmentation in the marketplace. This creates an opportunity for marketers and advertisers to recognize established consumers in their advertisements before they become alienated and disaffected because they feel underappreciated.

Inclusion of Physically Impaired Persons for the Purposes of Social Interaction

Social stigmas associated with disabilites can isolate the individual more effectively than the limitations imposed by the disability (Benshoff, 1992). Stigmas can result because people are not exposed to persons with disabilities and do not have an understanding of them (Kent, 1984).

Kent (1994) asked college students about their feelings, concerns, and beliefs toward paraplegics. Results of the study suggest much of the negative affect and feeling of discomfort is partially ascribed to the students uncertainty about appropriate role expectations and role enactment. Kent's (1984) data indicates one of the best ways to overcome discomfort, fear, and prejudice toward impaired people is through direct and frequent contact at peer level.

Social interaction between impaired and non-impaired people can be awkward. This fact can contribute to the slow acceptance of the physically impaired by society. Sagatun (1985) looked at the effects of acknowledging a disability and initiating interaction between impaired and non-impaired persons. He found non-disabled people feel uncomfortable about initiating contact with a disabled person. A situation where a physically disabled person initiates the conversation and/or is first to acknowledge the disability is greatly preferred by non-disabled people.

Besides being first to initiate the conversation, it has been found what is talked about greatly effects the acceptance of an impaired person. When an impaired person discusses doing typical activities and/or athletic activities they are more likely to make a non-impaired person feel at ease and gain acceptance (Belgrave, 1984).

Negative attitudes towards those with disabilities are found in unexpected situations. Healthcare professionals can have such negative feelings (Gething, 1992). Although health professionals possess medical knowledge, they come into contact with disabiled persons during a crisis or at acute stages of readjustment. They have less contact in their jobs with disabiled persons who are enjoying life in the mainstream of the community. As a result, many health professionals acquire attitudes which mirror or are more negative than those in the general population.

Young children are a particularly important target group for attitude-enrichment programs. Events that occur in childhood have a lasting impact. Positive experiences introduced early in a child's life can be effective to overcome and prevent further adherence to stereotypes associated with disability (Morrison, 1987). It is possible to develop positive reinforcers in the environment that reward valuing people for themselves regardless of race, creed, religious background, or disability (ibid, 1987).

Media educational activity has proven to effect children's' attitudes. Morrison (1987) measured the effects of a brief film designed to show the aspirations and interests of children with disabilities are similar to those of non-disabled children. The film was viewed by a group of fourth graders and shown to have a positive affect on them.

According to Morrison, students who viewed the film were more attracted to children with disabilities.

Inclusion of Physically Impaired Persons in Television

A study was done in 1980 to see if people with disabilities were included in television programming (Byrd, 1983). In Byrd's study, a disabled person was broadly defined as any screen character with a major difference from the average character portrayed on television other than racial or socio-economic differences. Researchers watched television for a week and rated the depiction of the disabled. During that week, 74 television commercials portrayed a disability. Forty-three percent of the commercials which depicted a disability were aired on Sunday or Monday night and used a dramatic premise. Fifty percent of the disabilities depicted in the ads were old age. The generally judged affect and accuracy of the portrayals in the commercials are considered neutral.

Researchers also rated television programming. Movies and situation comedies had more depiction of disabilities than other programs. The ratings of the accuracy of these disability portrayals are also considered realistic or neutral in a significant number of programs. Old age and mental illness are the primary categories depicted in the programming.

Inclusion of Physically Impaired Persons in Advertisements

The idea of using physically impaired models in advertising is not a new concept. An article in Ad Week discusses how companies used disabled people in their advertisements (Enrico 1987). "We took the attitude that we'd show a person who wears Levi's who just happens to be in a wheelchair," said Mike Koelker, the executive creative director of the Levi's 501 campaign. "We were surprised by the overwhelming positive response (ibid., 1987, P. 36).

Three years later, Target Stores used physically impaired children in their advertisements (Feder, 1991). Physically impaired children were used eight times and the company received more than 800 responses. One woman from Texas wrote, "You have taken a giant step in promoting truth in advertising. It's not a perfect world and people shouldn't be made to feel imperfect because of a handicap" (ibid, 1991, p.50).

Including the physically impaired in advertisements doesn't always generate positive feedback. DowBrands and Burger King used individuals with Down syndrome in television ads (Goldman, 1993, p.B8). The companies received criticism for their advertisements. At least one critic, Advertising Age's Bob Garfield, found the television ads exploitive. Writing in the weekly trade publication, Garfield called one ad "appalling and the most crassly contrived slice-of-life in advertising history" (Goldman, 1993). However, the National Down Syndrome Congress supported DowBrands and its advertisement.

There are times when advertisements that include a physically impaired model do not receive support from the physically impaired. An anti-drinking and driving campaign included an advertisement that insinuated being physically handicapped meant a person was condemned to live without joy, hope or opportunity. The ad showed a man sitting in a wheelchair positioned in the shadows. The "dark man" is often presented in advertisements as a person condemned (O'Leary, 1991, p.6).

"Advertisers are becoming more aware that people with disabilities are consumers and contributing citizens, not metaphors of despair," says Heather Ney, director of publishing and promotion for the Canadian Rehabilitation Council (CRC). However, lack of widespread positive publicity in the media is holding up social progress in this area," (O'Leary, 1991, p.6).

In a Marketing News article (1992), Goerne discusses the notion of using the physically impaired in advertising campaigns. Goerne writes, "Recent legislative gains are proving to marketers the estimated 43 million Americans with disabilities have no handicaps in terms of buying power." Several large companies such as Apple Computer Inc., McDonalds, Target Stores, and Budweiser included the physically impaired in their campaigns (Goerne, 1992, p.1).

This approach was vogue after the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed in 1990. Companies were required to spend money to bring their facilities to ADA specifications. Chey tried to attract handicapped workers and customers to benefit from their costly remodeling. Bob

Thacker, vice president of marketing for Target Stores, said, "There's 43 million people with disabilities...any good businessman is going to say, 'Gee', these people buy things too" (Goerne, 1992, p.32).

A handful of companies have chosen to develop and market products to the handicapped. IBM, Xerox, and AT&T sell products to aid people with disabilities (Jaben, 1992). IBM Corporation marketed eight products for people with disabilities in the IBM Independence Series. They were developed in its Special Needs Systems facility in Boca Raton, Florida. Xerox also made efforts to develop products and appeal to the physically handicapped.

Bank of America has a car loan for people of low-to-moderate income who use wheelchairs (Lunt, 1994). "Buying a new car is expensive for anybody, and to adapt it to a wheelchair basically doubles the price," says Dave Howell, vice-president at Bank of America Arizona (ibid, 1994, p. 52). National City Bank provides special services to the blind such as talking checking account statements (Hotchkiss, 1996). Rex Minrath, a manager for National City Bank, says, "We have made some good loans, even car loans to those who have a sighted person who lives with them, mortgages, home improvement loans, and consolidation loans. Blind customers have their own businesses too" (ibid, 1996, p.25).

FIRST PHASE OF PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Introspective Interview

Demographic Data

The research subject is a 25 year old single, white, male attending a private university for his Master degree in Integrated Corporate Communication. He has an annual income in excess of $45,000 and owns an accessible ranch style townhome in a small town near a medium-sized urban market. He lives alone.

Behaviouristic Data

He always buys Tide detergent because he grew up having his clothes washed in Tide. He is also brand loyal to Pepsi and Kodak film. He will occasionally drink other brands of soft drinks but he is completely loyal to Kodak film.

Brand loyalties have been greatly influenced by his parents. Products they bought in the past are often what he buys.

In addition to being brand loyal to some products he is loyal to certain stores. He consistently shops at Wal-mart before shopping other discount stores. Wal-mart usually has the lowest prices and is convenient because its just a few blocks away. He is loyal to Godfather's Pizza because, "they have the best pizza."

He owns two motor vehicles with some special adaptive equipment. They are a Mercury Cougar and a Jeep Grand Cherokee. He enjoys driving and likes to spend the day cleaning them inside and out.

Monthly Allocation of Income

Healthcare (Health Insurance, Medication, etc.)	33%
Education	26%
Car Payments	12%
Utilities (Gas/Electricity, Phone, Cable, etc.)	10%
Credit Cards	10%
Food	8%
Cellular Phone	1%
Total Expenses	100%

Physiographic Data

The research subject broke his spinal cord when he was thrown from an all-terrain-vehicle. He was paralyzed in all four limbs and is categorized as a quadriplegic. He is able to walk with crutches for short distances. He uses a wheelchair for any distance of travel. Overall, he enjoys good health.

Thoughts aboout his disability

The following first-person comments were written in regard to a question about having a disability.

> Although I am disabled and spend a majority of time in a wheelchair, I don't see myself as being different from anyone else. I enjoy doing many of the same things the non-disabled enjoy. I like to fish, go out to movies, and visit new places. Along the same line, I don't enjoy doing a lot of things other people don't enjoy doing. I have to go get groceries, pay bills, and clean my house just like everyone else. My disability slows me down from doing those things, but it does not stop me. I see myself as an able person who happens to have a disability. Therefore, I am entitled to the same pleasures and experiences people without a disability have.
>
> Unfortunately, many people don't see me as being like themselves. There have been several times when

> people are surprised to hear that I attend college, live on my own, and/or drive a car. Usually, when people realize that I can do those things, they are impressed and think it is a major accomplishment. I have always had trouble understanding why those things are impressive to people.
>
> Most people have no understanding of what it is like to live with a disability and don't know what kind of affect it has on a person. The reason for this is lack of exposure. If non-disabled people don't see disabled people doing everyday tasks, they have no reason to believe the disabled can do such tasks (Personal Introspective Interview, March 1997).

Psychographic Data

According to a VALS 2 Typology the subject took via the SRI Consulting service, he is an "Actualizer/Experiencer." "Actualizers are successful, sophisticated, active, 'take-charge' people with high self-esteem and abundant resources...Experiencers are young, vital, enthusiastic, impuylsive and rebellious" (SRI Consulting Online Service).

He has many interests including photography which he practiced before his accident and still does it. He likes to fish and enjoys the outdoors. Often, he spends time listening to music or watching movies.

He has an extensive collection of movies on video tapes and music on CDs. He listens to a variety of different music ranging from classical to rock 'n roll. Some of his favorite artists are Billy Joel, Harry Connick Jr, Babyface, and P.M. Dawn. He prefers action and adventure films but enjoys all types of movies.

Media Habits

During the week, the subject gets up early and turns on the radio and to get ready for school. He lives away from the university campus, so he commutes in his own auto by himself. He attends classes and has lunch in the student cafeteria. While eating lunch, he watches the local television news in the dinning room. After school, he goes home and often watches television for a short time. He fixes dinner with the television turned on so he can hear it. After eating dinner, he goes to his office to study. Normally, he listens to his radio while he studies till late in the night. While laying in bed, he watches television until he falls asleep while the television plays.

Television

The subject normally watches television and/or listens to the radio more than he reads a magazine or newspaper. This is consistent with the Burnett and Paul's (1986) findings. There are several television programs he watches on a regular basis. They include: X Files, Chicago Hope, Frazier, NYPD Blue, Law & Order, Friends, Seinfield, E.R., and Millennium. He also regularly watches ABC's Nightly News and the local news on the NBC affiliate.

Following is a table of his media kept during the week under study.

Television Media Weekly Diary

	Channel	Programming	Time	Hours
Sun.	Family	Movie: Twins	6:00 pm-7:00 pm	1
	NBC	Movie: Asteroid	8:00 pm-10:00 pm	2
	NBC	News/Sports Show	10:00 pm-11:00 pm	1
Mon.	NBC	Movie: Asteroid	8:00 pm-10:00 pm	2
Tues.	NBC	Frazier	8:00 pm-8:30 pm	0.5
	ABC	NYPD Blue	9:00 pm-10:00 pm	1
Wed.	ABC	I.S.U. Basketball	8:00 pm-10:00 pm	2
	NBC	News	10:00 pm-10:30 pm	0.5
Thus.	NBC	"Must See T.V." Friends Single Guy Seinfield Naked Truth E.R.	7:00 pm-10:00 pm	3
Fri.	FOX	Millennium	8:00 pm-9:00 pm	1
	ABC	20/20	9:00 pm-10:00 pm	1
	NBC	News	10:00 pm-10:30 pm	0.5
	NBC	Tonight Show	10:30 pm-11:00 pm	0.5
Sat.	ABC	Basketball	12:45 pm-3:00 pm	2.25
	NBC	News	6:00 pm-6:30 pm	0.5
	NBC	Wheel Fortune	6:30 pm-7:00 pm	0.5
	NBC	Bloopers	7:00 pm-8:00 pm	1
	NBC	Guild Awards	8:00 pm-10:00 pm	2
	Total Hours			**22.25**

Radio Media Weekly Diary

Due to his schedule, taste and lifestyle the subject listens to the radio a great deal. His diary relfects approximately 22 hours each week are spent with his radio turned on to his favorite music. His primary use of the radio is as a background or in his auto. There are two primary stations KCCQ (107.1) and KSTZ (102.5). Both radio stations broadcast a Top 40 format. Since this study doesn't conern itself with radio specifically, and listens to his radio randomly we will not report his specific radio consumption diary.

Print Media

Sometimes, he has trouble separating pages from each other. It is extra work for the subject to turn pages. He doesn't have controlled movement with his fingers. His fingers constantly curl into his hand. When his fingers aren't working well, trying to thumb through a magazine or newspaper is very frustrating. This is due to the disability of his hands and represents a need for a physiographic segmentation in product development and commercial messages.

The subject subscribes to four different magazines. They are: Entertainment Weekly, Motor Trend, Marketing News, and Viking Update. Other print media he reads is his local newspaper, the Ankeny Press Citizen and occasionally the Sunday edition of the Des Moines Register.

Print Media Weekly Diary

	Magazine/Newspaper	Time	Hours
Sun.	No printed media read		
Mon.	No printed media read		
Tues.	Entertainment Weekly	9:30 am-10:00 am	.5
Wed.	Ankeny Press Citizen	9:30 am-10:00 am	.5
Thus.	No printed media read		
Fri.	No printed media read		
Sat.	No printed media read		
	Total Hours		**1.0**

Direct Mail Advertising Weekly Diary

Type of Mail	# of Pieces
Catalogs:	
Clothing	2
Letters:	
Services	4
Products	2
Total Pieces	**8**

Phase One Research Findings

The average week of media consumption recorded by the subject reveals a lack of inclusion for physically impaired models. In 22.25 hours of television programming, none television advertisements contained a visually-detected physically impaired person.

Due to the lack of inclusion of physically impaired persons in the advertising, we expanded our observations and included the content of the television programming simialr to studies done in the past already discussed.

Two visually-detected physically impaired people were found. Descriptions and ratings of each disability portrayal are in the Appendix. In program A, the physically impaired person was judged to be portrayed as a negative role model. The dramatic story-line made the physically impaired woman look helpless and naive. In program B, the visually-detected physically impaired person was judged to be portrayed as a positive role model. The character was strong, intelligent, and in charge.

There were no physically impaired persons used as models in the print advertising found during the course of the subject's regular consumption of print media. Print media included: direct mail, newspapers and magazines.

SECOND PHASE OF PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

The second phase of the research project was developed to check check the reliability of the data from the first phase. Based on the literature review we felt television programming held the most promise for positive findings so we designed a research project to check our findings.

Research Method

NBC programming was taped during prime time from 7:00 pm to 10:00 p.m. for one week. The NBC network was chosen because during this time slot it is rated the number one network.

When reviewing all of the taped commercials several variables were noted when coding the data. Those variables were: character, role and product.

Character: Visually-detected physically impaired model not including impairment due to age.

Role: The role of the visually-detected physically impaired character was either major or minor. A major role was one in which the character was either the focus of the commercial and/or had a speaking part. A minor role was one in which the character was one of many characters in a commercial and had no speaking part.

Product: The products being advertised were placed in relevant categories for data organization. The product categories are as follows: Automotive (included all car commercials.); Retail (included retail chains, such as JC Penny & Wal-mart and retail items, such as blue jeans.); Restaurants (included McDonalds, Olive Garden and other restaurant chains.); Technology (included Cannon copiers, DVD movie systems and other types of technological products.); Services (included credit card companies, insurance companies, etc.); Food (included popcorn, bagels and other food products.); Healthcare (included products such as deodorant, shampoo, etc.); Pharmaceutical (included Tylenol, Pepcid AC, etc.); Cosmetics (included all types of make-up.); and Miscellaneous (included Iowa Lottery, air fresheners, and others).

Commercials with no people in view of the camera were excluded from the study. Public service announcements created by the network which used their prime time program characters to give feel-good messages were not evaluated for this study. Incidently to this research, these network messages did not contain any visually-detected physically impaired.

A particular product's television commercial may air more than once each night, so a specific commercial using a physically impaired model may be recorded more than once. For this research each showing is counted because such occurrences of frequency do not hurt the validity of this data and accurately reflects the concept of advertising frequency.

Phase Two Research Findings

After eliminating those commercials that didn't contain people in view of the camera and public service announcements, 259 commercials were recorded and analyzed.

Only four of those 259 commercials had at least one physically impaired character. These results indicate less than 2% of all prime time commercials airing on NBC from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm for one week had a visually-detected physically impaired model.

The following table represents the number of commercials in each product category aired during the times specified and the number of advertisements with visually-detected physically impaired models.

Television Commercials

Aired on NBC by Category

Product	Number Commercials	Physically Impaired
Automotive	44	0
Retail	25	0
Restaurant	18	0
Technology	19	0
Service	45	2
Food	37	2
Healthcare	18	0
Pharmaceutical	24	0
Cosmetics	13	0
Miscellaneous	16	0
Total	**259**	**4**

The research found three different advertisements which used physically impaired models during NBC's prime time broadcast programming. One of the ads was broadcast twice.

One service ad was for an insurance company. The physically impaired character was shown as being helped by the advertiser through his misfortune because he had good insurance. The physically impaired character had a major role.

The other service advertisement found in the research included a physically impaired models for a hospital's medical rehabilitation facility advertisement. The visually-detected physically impaired person in the advertisement who had a major role was the patient being physically rehabilitated. Minor roles were also given to visually-detected physically impaired characters who were also being helped through rehabiliation during the advertisement.

The other two advertisements found in the research were in the food product category and were the same ad. The ad was for a major coffee manufacturer. The visually-detedcted physically impaired model had a minor role in this advertisement.

CONCLUSIONS

Visually-detected physically impaired models are relatively forgotten in current general advertising. Compared with the 19 percent of the US population which is physically impaired there is still considerable under-representation in television of the disabled as positive, major role models.

The self-interview of the physically impaired student shows people with disabilities have similar backgrounds, interests, lifestyles, and purchasing habits as those people without lifestyle handicaps. This suggests physically impaired individuals purchase the same types of products for the same reasons as do non-physically impaired individuals as well as products which are developed for the physiographic segmentation. It is logical physically impaired individuals could be included in advertising for all types of products. It is easy to cast a major role for a physically impaired model eating a fast food hamburger; washing a car, listening to a stereo or watching a television. Yet, this media study shows these types of models are not used in the advertisements for these products

As Byrd (1983) said 15 years ago, this is the type of physically impaired person that should be in the media, but unfortunately, it is the type rarely seen.

Media studies have shown non-physically impaired people feel uncomfortable being around or talking with physically impaired people (Kent, 1984). These same studies report the cause as being ignorance. Not ignorance in the sense of a person's intelligence, but as an unawareness and/or unfamiliarity. Studies show how this ignorance can be cured. Simply showing a short film was enough for kids to realize people with disabilities are not much different from themselves and can be accepted (Morrison, 1987). A television commercial is a short film. However, unlike a film being shown to a class of fourth graders, a commercial is seen by millions and can have a powerful positive impact.

Advertisers today use fewer physically impaired models than they did during the few advertising media studies done in the 1980's. When the advertiser might include a major role for a physically impaired model, it is for a classical stereotype like the insurance advertisement or the physical rehabilitation facility found in the second phase of our research. These are the type of images Nelson (1996) refers to as "Images of Disability."

It is ironic a rehabilitation facility advertisement intending to help a population would hurt them. In our research, the healthcare facility portrayed their major and minor disabled characters in the exact stereotypical roles (crisis and readjustment) Gething's (1992) research showed created negative feelings in healthcare professionals.

Advertisers like Levis, Target, IBM and Kids R Us have attested to the good will and sales which are generated by being inclusive of all aggragates of the segmented target market. Media researchers like Morris and Kent have demonstrated the positive value of being inclusive of physically impaired models in the media. Yet, the advertising community continues to ignore its sense of social responsibility and good business sense.

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APPENDIX

Program #1

Network: ABC

Title: NYPD Blue

Disability: physical disability (had upper body movement)

Time Slot: 9:00 pm

Actor depicting disability: unknown white female actress in her forties

Day of Week: Tuesday

Length of Program: 60 min.

Type: Police/Dramatic Series

Observations:

The disabled character was taken advantage of by two con-artists. The character's daughter was talking down to her by saying she would have to watch her mother because she was unable to take care of herself. The disabled character never had a chance to speak. Her daughter spoke for her. The segment left the impression that physically impaired people are easy targets because they are unable to take care of themselves.

Program #2

Network: NBC

Title: E.R.

Disability: physical disability (character had a limp and used a crutch)

Time Slot: 9:00 pm

Actor depicting disability: unknown white female actress in her forties

Day of Week: Thursday

Length of Program: 60 min.

Type: Dramatic Series

Observations:

The character is a regular in the series and plays a supporting role. The character is one of the head doctors in the E.R.

The character is very intelligent and has a take charge attitude.

EFFECTIVENESS OF NEGATIVE POLITICAL ADVERTISING

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EFFECTIVENESS OF NEGATIVE POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Throughout history politicians have used various methods, such as whistle-stop speeches, political advertising and political rallies, to achieve their primary goal, the winning of votes. However, over the years, politicians have found that it is most advantageous to use political advertising to persuade voters. And a significant trend in today's political dvertising is the increasing use of negative political advertising.

Why do political practitioners increasingly use negative political advertising? Do they think negative ads are the most effective way to persuade voters in a short period of time in order to win an election? This paper tries to answer these questions

EFFECTIVENESS OF NEGATIVE POLITICAL ADVERTISING

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history politicians have used various methods, such as whistle-stop speeches, political advertising and political rallies, to achieve their "primary goal, the winning of votes" (Szybillo and Hartenbaum, 1976, p.42). However, over the years, politicians have found that it is most advantageous to use political advertising to persuade voters. According to Ansolabehere, Behr and Iyengar (1991), campaign spending in the United States has grown fifteen-fold since 1952 from $140 million to nearly $2 billion in 1988. (pp. 109-110). They say less than 5 percent of campaign expenditures in 1952 were devoted to radio and television time. By 1972, 15 percent of campaign expenditures were for broadcasting. By1988, about 20 percent of nearly $2 billion went to purchase airtime. If you add the salaries of media consultants and advertising production costs, at least 40 percent of campaign dollars are spent on media expenditures in 1988. (pp. 110-111). Dwight Eisenhower's campaign in 1956 was the first presidential campaign which relied heavily on political television commercials (Advertising Age, 1973). After the election, "Truman, referring to the effects of political advertising . . .. commented that it was the first time in 148 years that a president had been elected without carrying a Congress with him" (as cited in Szybillo and Hartenbaum, 1976, p. 42).

Because political advertising, unlike product advertising, must get results in a short period of time, political practitioners use several kinds of political advertising: image, issue and negative advertising. Although there exists no rule in using political advertising for an election, prior to the 1980s, candidates usually used issue or image ads at the beginning of a campaign to establish their positive image and then used negative ads at the end of the campaign to attack the opponent. However, those strategies were abandoned in the 1980s. A significant trend in today's political advertising is the increasing use of negative political advertising. In today's political campaign, candidates, either challengers or incumbents, use negative ads from the beginning of a political campaign. After examining more than 1,100 political commercials, Sabato (1981, pp. 165-66) asserted that:

> Even when television is used to communicate political truth (at least from one candidate's perspective), the truth can be negatively packaged - attacking the opponent's character and record rather than supporting one's own. If there is a single trend obvious to most American consultants, it is the increasing proportion of negative political advertising.... At least a third of all spot commercials in recent campaigns have been negative, and in a minority of campaigns half or more of the spots are negative in tone or substance.

The increasing use of negative political advertising has been promoted by two unrelated legal touchstones (as cited in Merritt, 1984, p.28). First, the Communication Act of 1934 made an important distinction between candidate ads and product or service ads. It stated that broadcasters could refuse all deceptive advertising except for political commercials. Second, the 1976 amendment to the Federal Election Campaign Act allowed private individuals and political action committees or PACs, to spend unlimited amounts on behalf of candidates. According to L. Sandy Maisel, author of *Parties and Elections in America*, the1976 amendment to the Federal Election Commission allowed PACs and individuals to make unlimited **independent political expenditures** on behalf of a candidate, i.e. they can spend as much as they want to independently support a articular candidate, including making their own commercials. As you point out, these expenditures are different than contributions to a specific candidate's official campaign, which the act limits to $1000 for an individual and $5000 for a PAC. The amendment was prompted by a U.S. Supreme Court decision, Buckley v. Valeo, 424 U.S. 1 (1976). As Maisel puts it, the court "ruled that limitations on such independent expenditures was an abridgment of the freedom on speech." (pp. 137-138). Although these two groups cannot make unlimited donations to a political campaign, they may cover certain expenses, such as advertising, without any limit. Because advertising sponsored by individuals or PACs is usually more aggressive than candidate-sponsored commercials, these ads are often negative.

Why do political practitioners increasingly use negative political advertising? Do they think negative ads are the most effective way to persuade voters in a short period of time in order to win an election?

To answer those questions, many researchers have conducted studies in a variety of ways, but the results are inconsistent. According to politicians, because attack ads work, they increasingly use such ads.

Up to now, the increasing use of negative advertising in political campaigns has created a considerable controversy between researchers and political practitioners. Thus, more research needs to be conducted in a variety of ways to measure the effectiveness of negative political advertising.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Various theories have been developed for the study of political advertising. However, the present study adopts two theories concerning the effectiveness of negative political advertising.

A. Expectancy theory

Expectancy theory focuses on the relationship between language use and the effectiveness of such language use on persuasion (Burgoon and Miller, 1985). Expectancy theory assumes that "since language is a rule-governed system, people develop norms and expectations concerning appropriate usage in given situations" (Burgoon and Miller, 1985, p. 199).

Most cultures and societies shape their own patterns of language and determine normative or non-normative patterns of language use. When messages conform to people's norms and expectations, "the norms and expectations are strengthened, but the messages exert minimal impact on attitudes" (Pfau et. al., 1992, p. 242).

On the other hand, when "communicators, intentionally or accidentally, violate norms governing appropriate language usage," they violate "the expectations of message receivers, and, in turn, affect their receptivity" (Burgoon and Miller, 1985, p.200). If messages violate people's norms and expectations, they can have more or less persuasive effects, depending on the circumstances (Pfau et. al., 1992).

Expectancy theory identifies two violations: positive or negative violation. In regard to the persuasion effects of the two violations, the theory assumes that when messages positively violate people's linguistic expectations, the violation has a positive impact toward people's attitudes and evokes persuasive effectiveness (Burgoon and Miller, 1985).

In contrast, when messages negatively violate people's linguistic expectations, "a boomerang effect occurs, with receivers changing to the position opposite to the one advocated by the communicator" (Burgoon and Miller, 1985, p. 200).

Expectancy theory can be applied to many fields of study. One application can be the effectiveness of negative political advertising. Based on the theory, it can be assumed that voters have normative expectations about negative political advertising because such advertising is one of the most common genres in today's politics, and, as a result, voters have been exposed to numerous negative ads.

Because most negative ads have been employed to attack the opponent's image or issues, people may expect negative political ads to have standard formats and intense messages. If negative political ads conform to people's normative expectations, expectancy theory defines it as a negative violation and predicts that it evokes negative effects toward the sponsor.

Many studies (Stewart, 1975; Surlin and Gordon, 1977; Garramone, 1984; Merritt, 1984) support the prediction. It should be noted, however, that the studies have the limitation that research was not conducted in actual elections. "In a true election, factors such as news coverage of the campaign, and especially news coverage of candidate advertising, may influence reactions to particular political advertising strategies" (Garramone et. al., 1990, p. 309).

Ansolabehere, Behr and Iyengar (1991) say that news coverage of ads create a "ripple effect." Campaign advertisements have become so important, that they are now a subject of news coverage and public debate in and of themselves. This ripple effect in the news is a significant incentive for campaigns to devote event more resources to advertising." (p.116)

Ansolabehere and Iyengar say media coverage of such ads further turn off independent voters and reinforce partisan voters (see below), amplifying the effects of negative ads. They argue that "advertisement tends to reinforce partisan inclinations, the ad-watches simply amplified its effects, thus playing into the hands of the candidates and their handlers" (p.11).

B. Cognitive response model

The cognitive response model was developed to monitor the effects of persuasive communications and was widely employed in many fields of study: "fear appeals, distraction, source credibility, and advertising effectiveness" (Lutz and Swasy, 1977, p. 366).

The response model assumes that when people are exposed to a message, they have psychological processes that determine the impact of the message (Wright, 1973). Wright (1973) asserted that three distinct responses are identified in the psychological process of a message acceptance: counterargument, source derogation, and support argument.

In the negative political advertising context, counterargument occurs when voters attempt to defend the target. When counterargument is activated, receivers would neutralize the message ("he [the target] is changed") to reduce the discrepancy (Merritt, 1984, p. 29). Source derogation involves "negative images of the sponsor ("he is a mudslinger") or of the message ('it's misrepresentation')" (Merritt, 1984, p. 29). Support argument involves "negative images of the target ('he is indeed that bad')" (Merritt, 1984, p. 29).

Wilson and Muderrisoglu (1979, p. 66) conducted "an initial study on the analysis of cognitive responses generated by comparative and non-comparative ads." Through the study, the authors found that comparative ads produced significantly more counterarguments, source derogations, and negative ad-related statements, but fewer support arguments and positive ad-related statements" (Wilson and Muderrisoglu, 1979, p. 571).

Merritt (1984, p. 29) cocluded that "since negative advertising is a variant of comparative advertising, [the] findings of product-related effects of comparative advertising suggest parallel effects for negative advertising."

Research (Stewart, 1975; Merritt, 1984; Garramone, 1984) on the impact of negative political advertising also supported the results of Wilson and Muderrisoglu (1979). For example, Garramone (1984) found that negative political advertising evokes source derogations. Wright also asserted that "source derogation is a more frequent response to dissonance than counterargument in situations where the source might be assumed biased" (as cited in Merritt, 1984, p. 29).

Therefore, it can be expected that negative political advertising would be likely to produce source derogations, in turn, causing harmful effects toward the sponsor.

C. Effectiveness of negative political advertising

The growth of negative political advertising has drawn the attention of numerous researchers. Most research has tried to find its effectiveness on "cognitive, affective, and conative components of voters responses" (Tinkham and Weaver-Lariscy, 1993, p. 379), but the results of the research are inconsistent. While some research supports the use of negative advertising, others assert that attack politics evoke a boomerang effect.

According to Basil et. al. (1991, p. 246), the counterproductive aspects of negative political advertising "may arise from the fact that negative advertisements are rated as 'effective' because the message itself remembered, but 'ineffective' because the candidate sponsoring the ad is harmed."

Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) argue that campaign advertising is effective.Using experiments primarily, their results show that political advertising is persuasive but not manipulative. (p.10). Specifically, they conclude that the ads "inform voters about the candidates'positions" (p.13) and "allows voters to develop differentiated images of the candidates, images that play an important role in shaping voting choices" (p.13). Although they say that more involved and attentive voters learn more from competitive political advertising, they say people who do not pay close attention to campaigns, such as low-income voters, can benefit from the information in the ads.

D. Intended effects

Garramone (1984, p. 250) defined the intended effects of negative advertising as "creating negative feelings toward the targeted candidate and positive feelings toward the sponsoring candidate." Kaid and Boydston (1987, p. 193), in an "experimental study of negative newspaper and television advertising by an independent sponsor," found that "negative advertising reduces the image evaluation of the targeted politician."

Garramone et. al. (1990) asserted that negative ads are very effective when differentiating or discriminating candidates' images, and they pointed out that:

> By providing concrete substantive information, a negative political ad may allow voters to distinguish candidate qualities, positions, and performance more readily than would other types of political information that provide less explicit information. Also, the greater perceived differences between candidates may lead voters to greater attitude polarization regarding the candidates. That is, by discerning clear differences between candidates, voters may be more likely to strongly like one candidate while strongly disliking the other (p.301).

Garramone (1984) asserted that one tactic to obtain the intended effect is to make the opponent untruthful, and he suggested that: the perceived truthfulness of negative political advertising may determine its impact.

Persuasion research indicates that the more credible a source, the more persuasive the message. Thus, the more truthful negative political advertising is perceived, the greater should be its impact. In 1981, Sabato indicated that although academic researchers have found that negative political ads cause a backlash effect, political consultants believe otherwise (as cited in Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 1991, p.14).

Political consultants assert that since "academic researchers usually look at negative advertising divorced from the strategy that propels it," they can't exactly prove its effectiveness (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 1991, p.18). Janet Mullins, the 1988 Bush campaign's media director, claimed that "everybody hates negative ads; then they rate them most effective in terms of decision making. There isn't any longterm effect . . . It is kind of like birth pains. Two days later, you forget how much it hurt. The same is true for negative advertising . . ." (as cited in Devlin, 1989, p.407).

Political consultants generally suggest that negative advertising is more effective in terms of information than positive advertising. Lau (1982, p.353), in a study of negativity in political perception, agreed with political consultants and indicated that "the tendency for negative information to have more weight than equally extreme or equally likely positive information appears in a variety of cognitive processing tasks."

Tinkham and Weaver-Lariscy's (1993) study of the impact of negative political TV commercials also supported "the negativity effect" (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 1991, p. 15), asserting that:

> Because negative messages derive their impact from a broader range of intervening variables than do positive messages, candidates whose message strategies are exclusively positive limit their potential voters to fewer criteria for judgment, and at the same time, limit themselves to fewer avenues of potential impact. Effective opponent denigration, in contrast, adds another broad dimension for judgment and influence (p. 394).

In addition, Nugent suggested that since "people are more apt to vote 'against' than 'for' something" (as cited in Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 1991, p. 30), negative advertising is effective in real political campaigns. "Political consultants' reliance on the use of negative political advertising in recent years is strongly grounded in the evidence provided by cognitive research" (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 1991, p. 16).

E. Unintended effects

Unintended effect usually refers to a boomerang effect. Garramone (1984, p. 251) defined a boomerang effect as one which "may create more negative feelings toward the sponsor, rather than toward the target." According to Garramone (1984, p. 250), "voters response varies with content theme, but backlash or boomerang may be the most common effect of negative political advertising."

In a 1985 experimental study, Garramone (1985) assumed that a boomerang effect of negative advertising resulted from two reasons:

> First, many viewers disapprove of advertising that attacks a candidate (Garramone, 1984; Stewart, 1975), and such viewers may develop negative feelings toward the sponsor of the advertising. Second, viewers may perceive the negative advertising as an infringement upon their right to decide for themselves. Such a perception may result in reactance, a boomerang effect in which the individual reacts in a manner opposite to the persuader's intention (Brehm, 1966) (as cited in Garramone, 1985, p. 148).

Stewart (1975) supported Garramone's assertion in his study of voter perception of mud-slinging in political communication. Stewart (1975, p. 282) found that "the majority of respondents view the mud-slinger as an untrustworthy, dishonest person who will do anything to win an election." Through a telephone survey of voters in Atlanta and Philadelphia, Surlin and Gordon (1977) also found that voters consider negative ads to be unethical.

Garramone (1984, p.252) conducted a telephone survey of mid-Michigan voters to investigate effects of negative advertising in terms of "perceived truthfulness" and "feelings toward both sponsor and target. " The results of the study (Garramone, 1984, p.258) proved that negative advertising has "a strong negative influence on the viewer's feeling toward the sponsor but only a slight net negative influence on feelings toward the target." Garramone (1984) also suggested that 75 percent of respondents disapproved the use of negative advertising.

Merritt's (1984) study of voters' responses to negative advertising in California Assembly District found that "the negative political advertising evokes negative affect toward both the targeted opponent and the sponsor" (p. 37).

F. The hierarchy of effects model

Lavidge and Steiner (1961) created a model to measure advertising effectiveness based on a classic psychological model that classifies behavior into three categories:

1. The cognitive component - the intellectual, mental, or "rational" states;
2. The affective component - the "emotional" or "feeling" states;
3. The conative or motivational component - the "striving" states, relating to the tendency to treat objects as positive or negative goals (p. 60).

In 1982, Lavidge and Steiner's model was developed by Ash and Wee (1982) to examine the effects of comparative advertising. In the case of advertising, the cognitive component involves both aspects of awareness and perceptions relative to the following dimensions: recall, information, believability, and comprehension (Ash and Wee, 1982). The affective component deals with consumers' feeling toward a product (Ash and Wee, 1982; Lavidge and Steiner, 1961). The conative component relates to consumers' conviction and buying intentions (Ash and Wee, 1982; Lavidge and Steiner, 1961).

Based on the literature review the present study suggests the following 3 hypotheses and 4 research questions.

H1. Negative political advertising will have a positive impact on informativeness.
H2: Negative political advertising will have a negative impact on believability (truthfullness).
H3: Negative political advertising will produce a negative impact on attitudes toward both the sponsor and the target.
Q1: Will perceived believability of negative political advertising have a positive relationship with a favorable attitude toward the sponsor and a negative relationship with a favorable attitude toward the target?
Q2: Does negative political advertising have different effects in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target depending on gender?
Q3. Does negative political advertising have different effects in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target depending on age?
Q4. Does negative political advertising have different effects in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target depending on income?

2. DESIGN AND METHODS

The primary purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of negative political advertising. Survey method was used to collect desired data, and four graduate students of the University of Missouri were employed as interviewers. Before conducting an actual survey, the interviewers were trained to understand the purpose of the present study and the contents of the questionnaire.

During two weeks of October 1996, 297 interviews with randomly selected residents of Columbia Missouri were completed.

3. RESULTS

Hypothesis 1 suggested that negative political advertising will have a positive impact on informativeness. As can be seen from Table 1, only 21.9 percent of the total respondents evaluated negative political advertising as informative while 47.5 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that negative political advertising is informative, and 30.6 percent said that they are neutral.

Interestingly, only 2 percent strongly agreed while 14.1 percent strongly disagreed that negative political advertising is informative. The overall mean score was 3.38. Thus, it can be inferred that the overwhelming response to informativeness of negative political advertising was negative. Hypothesis 1, therefore, is not supported.

Table 1

Question: Political advertising that attacks the opposing candidate usually gives me new information about candidates.

		Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	6	2.0 %
	2	59	19.9 %
	3	91	30.6 %
	4	99	33.4 %
Strongly disagree	5	42	14.1 %
Total		297	100 %

Hypothesis 2 suggested that negative political advertising might have a negative impact on believability (truthfulness). As can be seen from Table 2, almost half of the total respondents evaluated negative political advertising as unbelievable while only 13.5 percent agreed that such advertising is believable. 36.4 percent were neutral, and the overall mean score was 3.48. Thus, hypothesis 2 can be supported.

Table 5

Question: Political advertising that attacks the opposing candidate is believable (truthful).

		Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	5	1.7 %
	2	35	11.8 %
	3	108	36.4 %
	4	109	36.7 %
Strongly disagree	5	40	13.4 %
Total		297	100 %

To test hypothesis 3 that negative political advertising will produce a negative impact on attitudes toward both the sponsor and the target, descriptive analyses were conducted.

As Tables 3 and 4 indicate, over half of the respondents expressed negative attitudes toward both the sponsor and the target, while less than 30 percent expressed positive attitudes toward both candidates. Of respondents, 14.1 percent had neutral -attitudes toward the sponsor, and 23.3 percent had neutral attitudes toward the target. As predicted, hypothesis 3, therefore, is supported.

Table 3

Question: Based on the advertisement, how do you feel about Ron Whitten who sponsored the political advertisement?

	Frequency	Percent
Positive	80	27.0%
Neutral	42	14.1%
Negative	175	58.9%
Total	297	100.0%

Table 4

Question: Based on the advertisement, how do you feel about David Strick who is attacked in the political advertisement?

	Frequency	Precent
Positive	50	16.0%
Neutral	71	23.9%
Negative	176	59.3%
Total	297	100.0%

Research question 1 suggested that perceived believability of negative political advertising will have a positive relationship with a favorable attitude toward the sponsor and a negative relationship with a favorable attitude toward the target. To find out correlations among dependent variables, a Pearson correlation test was conducted.

As Table 5 indicates, believability has a high positive correlation with favorable attitudes toward the sponsor and has a negative correlation with favorable attitudes toward the target. In other words, those who are likely to believe negative political advertising tend to have positive attitudes toward the sponsor and negative attitudes toward the target.

In addition, believability is positively correlated with approval. That is, those who are likely to believe negative political advertising tend to approve of that candidates use of such advertising. Informativeness is positively correlated with believability, approval and favorable attitudes toward the sponsor, although it is negatively related to favorable attitudes toward the target.

Table 5
Pearson correlations among dependent variables

	Informa-tiveness	Believa-bility	Approval	Attitude/ sponsor	Attitude/ target
Informativeness	___				
Believability	.47*	___			
Approval	.38*	.39*	___		
Attitude/ sponsor	.42*	.56*	.29*	___	
Attitude/ target	-.03	-.02	-.07	.05	___

N = 297
* p < .001

Approval of negative political advertising has a high positive correlation with favorable attitudes toward the sponsor and a negative correlation with favorable attitudes toward the target.

Research question 2 is "Does negative political advertising have different effects in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target depending on gender?" One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to examine research question 2. Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9 contain the results of the tests.

As can be seen from Table 6, there is no significant difference in evaluating informativeness of negative political advertising between male and female respondents. Thus, it can be assumed that both men and women generally do not differ in their attitudes on informativeness of negative political advertising.

Table 6
One-way ANOVA for informativeness
of negative political advertising by gender

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	1	.13	.13	.12	.73
Within	295	307.64	1.04		
Total	296	307.77			

Table 7 indicates that there is no significant difference in evaluating the believability of negative political advertising between male and female respondents. Based on the mean scores of males (3 .45) and females (3 .51). Thus, it can be inferred that men and women do not differ in believability toward negative political advertising.

Table 7
One-way ANOVA for believability
of negative political advertising by gender

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	1	.26	.26	.3	.59
Within	295	255.95	.87		
Total	296	256.21			

According to Table 8, there is a significant difference (F = 4.44, p < .05) between male and female respondents on attitudes toward the sponsor. Thus, it can be inferred that women feel more negatively about the sponsor than men.

Table 8
One-way ANOVA for attitudes toward the sponsor by gender

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	1	115.17	115.17	4.44	.04
Within	295	7660.34	25.97		
Total	296	7775.51			

As can be seen from Table 9, there is a highly significant difference (F = 18.67, p < .001) between male and female respondents on attitudes toward the target. Scheffe's test also supported the result. Thus, it can be inferred that women are more likely to have negative attitudes toward the target than men.

Table 9
One-way ANOVA for attitudes toward the target by gender

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	1	380.19	380.19	18.67	.001
Within	295	6008.90	20.36		
Total	296	6389.09			

Research question 3 is "Does negative political advertising have different effects in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target depending on age?" One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine research question 6. Tables 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 report the results.

Table 10 indicates that there is no significant difference in evaluating informativeness of negative political advertising depending on age.

Table 10

One-way ANOVA for informativeness
of negative political advertising by age

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	4	6.69	1.67	1.62	.16
Within	292	301.07	1.03		
Total	296	307.76			

As can be seen from Table 11, there is a significant difference (F = 3.07, p < .01) in evaluating believability of negative political advertising depending on age. Based on mean scores of each group presented on Table 8, Scheffe's test identified that there is a

Table 11
One-way ANOVA for believability
of negative political advertising by age

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	4	10.34	2.58	3.07	.01
Within	292	245.86	.84		
Total	296	256.20			

Table 12
Mean scores of age groups
on believability of negative political advertising

Group	Level of age	Frequency	Mean
1	18-25	69	3.31
2	26-35	68	3.35
3	36-45	62	3.45
4	46-55	55	3.83
5	over 55	43	3.58

significant difference between group 1 and group 4. That is, it can be assumed that younger people are more likely to believe negative political advertising than older people.

Table 13 reports that there is a highly significant difference (F = 7.61, p < .001) on attitudes toward the sponsor depending on age. Based on mean scores of each group presented on Table 14, Scheffe's test identified that there is a significant difference between group 1 and group 5, between group 2 and group 5, between group 1 and group 4 and between group 2 and group 4.

Table 13
One-way ANOVA for attitudes toward the sponsor by age

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	4	734.32	183.58	7.61	.001
Within	292	7041.18	24.11		
Total	296	7775.50			

Table 14
Mean scores of age groups on attitudes toward the sponsor

Group	Level of age	Frequency	Mean
1	18-25	69	22
2	26-35	68	22.42
3	36-45	62	23.25
4	46-55	55	25.52
5	over 55	43	26.02

That is, it can be inferred that younger people, in general, have more positive attitudes toward the sponsor than older people.

As Table 15 indicates, there is no significant difference on attitudes toward the target depending on age.

Table 15

One-way ANOVA for attitudes toward the target by age

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)	
Between	4	49.38		12.34	.57	.68
Within	292	6339.71		21.71		
Total	296	6389.09				

Research question 7 is "Does negative political advertising have different effects in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target depending on income?" One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine research question 7. Tables 16, 17, 18, and 19 present the results.

As can be seen from Table 16, there is a significant difference (F = 3.38, p < .01) in evaluating informativeness of negative polifical advertising depending on income. Scheffe's test revealed that there is a significant difference between group 1 and group 5 and between group 1 and group 4. Mean scores of each group are reported on Table 17. That is, it can be assumed that those with lower incomes tend to consider negative political advertising as more informative than do high income level people.

Table 16

One-way ANOVA for informativeness
of negative political advertising by income

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	4	13.62	3.4	3.38	.01
Within	292	294.14	1.00		
Total	296	307.76			

Table 17 reports that there is a significant difference (F = 3.78, p < .01) on attitudes toward the sponsor depending on income. Based on mean scores of each group presented on Table 18, Scheffe's test identified that there is a significant difference between group 1 and group 4 and between group 1 and group 5. That is, it can be inferred that low income level people tend to have more positive attitudes toward the sponsor than do high income level people.

Table 17
One-way ANOVA for attitudes toward the sponsor by income

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	4	382.57	95.64	3.78	.01
Within	292	7392.93	25.31		
Total	296	7775.51			

Table 18
Mean scores of income groups on attitudes toward the sponsor

Group	Level of income	Frequency	Mean
1	Less than $20,000	26	20.23
2	$20,000-$30,000	62	23.64
3	$30,000-$45,000	71	23.30
4	$45,000-$60,000	72	24.22
5	over $60,000	66	24.50

As Table 19 indicates, there is no significant difference on attitudes toward the target depending on income. Scheffe's test also supported the result. However, according to mean scores of each group (group 1 = 24.88, group 2 = 24.24, group 3 = 23.39, group 4 = 23.48 and group 5 = 22.66), group 1 has the most negative attitudes toward the target.

Table 19
One-way ANOVA for attitudes toward the target by income

Source	DF	Sum of square	Mean square	F	Significance of F (Pr)
Between	4	129.46	32.36	1.51	.19
Within	292	6259.63	21.43		
Total	296	6389.09			

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study investigated the effectiveness of negative political advertising in terms of informativeness, believability and attitudes toward both the sponsor and the target. Before discussing the results of the present study, it should be noted that "it is difficult to determine the effectiveness of political [advertising]" (Thorson et. al., 1991, p.483). As Devlin (1986) asserted, because many things happen simultaneously in a real election, "it is difficult to isolate the impact of political advertising" (as cited in Thorson et. al., 1991, p.483). The present study, however, revealed many interesting effects of negative political advertising.

The findings suggest that negative political advertising was perceived as uninformative, which is inconsistent with the results of the previous research (Lau, 1982; Garramone et. al., 1990) and political practitioners' claims. They asserted that negative political advertising has a positive impact on informativeness.

As expected, negative political advertising was perceived as untruthful, and perceived truthfulness was positively related to favorable attitudes toward the sponsor and negatively related to favorable attitudes toward the target.

Although the perceived truthfulness of negative political advertising produced its intended impact, a minority of the respondents perceived such ads to be true. Overall, negative political advertising produced negative evaluations of both the sponsor and the target. Those effects are consistent with the findings of the previous research (Garramone, 1984; Merritt, 1984). As Garramone (1984) noted, such a negative effect might be related to the respondents' overall attitudes toward negative political advertising, revealing that over half of them expressed disapproval of using such ads.

As mentioned above, although decisive conclusions are not drawn to determine the impact of negative political advertising, the findings of the present study have implications for politicians. political consultants and advertising agencies. The findings raise doubts about using negative political advertising in a political campaign. As Merritt (1984) noted, respondents' negative attitudes toward both candidates and their overall disapproval of negative political advertising resulted from the increasing use of negative political advertising during the 80's, producing cynicism toward politics and declining political participation.

Because negative political advertising that identifies the sponsor and the target hurts both candidates, when a candidate uses such advertising, it would be better not to identify the sponsor. Garramone (1984) also pointed this out and suggested that "independent political action committees sponsoring negative advertising offer the candidates they help this anonymity advantage. Independent sponsors may contribute the additional benefit of greater credibility" (p.259).

Surlin and Gordon (1977) asserted that African Americans are more likely to believe that negative political advertising is informative and have more positive attitudes toward the sponsor than whites. But, those findings were not supported in the present study. The findings of the present study indicated that there was no significant difference in evaluating informativeness, believability and attitudes toward the sponsor and the target between African Americans and whites. That is, both African Americans and whites, in general, considered negative political advertising as uninformative and unbelievable and had negative attitudes toward both the sponsor and the target.

There were no significant gender differences in evaluating informativeness and believability of negative political advertising. But, interestingly, in terms of attitudes toward candidates, women were more negative toward both the sponsor and the target than were men.

The findings suggested that although both younger and older people agreed that negative political advertising is not informative, older people consider negative political advertising as less believable and have more negative attitudes toward the sponsor than younger people.

Negative political advertising would be effective to lower income level people. They perceived negative political advertising as more informative and more believable and had more positive attitudes toward the sponsor than higher income level people.

Therefore, based on the findings, it can be inferred that when negative political advertising targets younger or lower income level people, rather than older or higher income level people, it has beneficial effects.

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Running head: SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIPS

Predicting Successful Internships

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Predicting Successful Internships

Abstract

Although previous research suggests the characteristics of successful interns and internships, little research has attempted to examine the relationships between them and specific outcomes. A canonical correlation analysis indicates that all the variables in a set of internship predictors are correlated with successful internship outcomes; that the predictors account for approximately one-half the variance in successful internships; and that the effectiveness of an intern's worksite supervisor is the single most important predictor of internship success.

Predicting Successful Internships

Internships have become a necessity for mass communication students making the transition from college to career. Researchers note this necessity: Kosicki and Becker (1995) report that 80% of journalism and mass communication (JMC) undergraduates serve as interns. Rowland (1994) found that an internship is the "deciding factor" for most entry-level jobs, and Horowitz (1997) found that students' assessments of their internship quality is a significant predictor of future job satisfaction.

Mass communication programs recognize this necessity, with most assisting students in locating internships (Basow & Byrne, 1993) and many offering academic credit. The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) recognizes the legitimacy of internship credit, allowing credit for up to 10 percent of a student's course work (ACEJMC, 1997). However, there is little empirical evidence to assess the quality of internships, to provide schools with predictors of quality internships, or to determine the relative importance of various predictors in assuring successful internships.

This study deals with such evidence. Its purpose is to assess the relationship between two sets of linearly related variables: predictors of internship success and outcomes of successful internships. The characteristics of advertising and public relations (PR) interns and their internships are used as predictors. Intern evaluations of the success of their internships are used as outcomes, or criterions. Focusing on the nature and strength of the relationships between predictors and outcomes, this study seeks to determine what needs to occur during an internship in order for beneficial outcomes to be realized.

Predictors

Six important predictors of internship success are suggested in the literature. These include the following: (a) academic preparedness, (b) proactivity/aggressiveness, (c) positive attitude, (d) quality of worksite supervision, (e) organizational practices and policies, and (f) compensation.

Academic preparedness. Several researchers note that the most successful interns are well prepared academically (Basow & Byrne, 1993; Beard, 1997; Campbell & Kovar, 1994). For many programs, academic preparation includes a specific number of completed credits, including a number of mass communication courses with an acceptable grade point average. Bourland-Davis, Graham and Fulmer (1997) note that interns should at least have "an understanding of the field, its key concepts, and basic, technological skills, especially writing" (p. 27). They conclude that basic skills include technical work, planning, interpersonal skills and a theoretical and practical understanding of mass communications.

The importance of academic preparedness is emphasized by Basow and Byrne (1993), who warn that some students should be cautioned "against attempting some internships prematurely" (p. 52). Similarly, Beard (1997) notes that one of the most significant findings from his study of interns is "that academic preparation leads to more and better opportunities on most internships" (p. 8). Better opportunities, in turn, lead to successful internships.

Proactivity/aggressiveness. The literature indicates that students are more likely to have successful internships if they demonstrate initiative (Basow & Byrne, 1993; Beard, 1997) and are aggressive in making their wants and needs known. Basow and Byrne, for instance, recommend that students be encouraged to be aggressive by volunteering for assignments and asking questions. Furthermore, Beard (1997) notes that "there is an almost universal assumption among interns and their supervisors that interns should demonstrate the same kind of initiative expected from new employees by finding things to do and asking questions" (p. 10). Beard found that when interns make their wants and needs known, their supervisors generally respond positively.

Positive attitude. The literature suggests that students will more likely have a successful internship if they have a positive attitude toward it as both a learning and occupational experience. In his study of interns and their supervisors, Beard (1997) found that both groups emphasized the importance of interns treating almost any task as a potential learning experience. Students are also expected to realize greater benefits from an internship if they treat it like a real job. Beard found that many internship supervisors expect interns to come to the worksite ready to work, and to exhibit the same attitudes as new, full-time employees. Similarly Bourland-Davis et al. (1997) suggest that interns should have accurate expectations and set appropriate goals for the internship.

Quality of supervision. Beard (1997) suggests that good supervisors manage the relationship with their interns by providing specific direction and examples, some autonomy and independence, and positive and constructive work-related feedback. Similarly, Taylor (1992) notes that good supervisors are supportive, increasing, rather than lowering, the intern's self-esteem. Such supervisors "demonstrate high work standards and competence, provide frequent feedback, develop the individual through coaching" (Taylor, p. 56), evaluate interns, and help interns to "understand how the isolated activities and encounters fit within the scope of an entire . . . program" (Bourland-Davis et al., 1997, p. 31).

Gabris and Mitchell (1992), in their survey of public administration interns, found that effective supervision was strongly and significantly correlated with an overall "intern satisfaction index." They conclude that ". . . supervisors who . . . work to develop interesting and challenging assignments for their interns, are more likely to find their interns satisfied with the educational benefits of the experience" (p. 191).

Organizational practices and policies. Related to the effectiveness of an intern's supervisor are the practices and policies that organizations use to structure and manage internships. Structure includes considering the length and appropriate terms of internships, establishing basic expectations, and conducting weekly intern meetings (Bourland-Davis et al., 1997).

Managing internships includes (a) providing interns with the physical and other resources needed to accomplish assigned work (Beard, 1997), (b) providing interns an experience that approximates that of a full-time employee (Verner, 1993), (c) providing students with the opportunity to work on projects from inception to completion (Beard) with little "busy work" (Campbeil & Kovar, 1994; Krasilovsky & Lendt, 1996), (d) providing opportunities for involvement in project decision-making (Gabris & Mitchell, 1992), and (e) providing appropriate study programs for the site (Bourland-Davis et al., 1997).

Compensation. Research indicates that interns have more successful internships if they are compensated for their work. Basow and Byrne (1993) contend that compensation should at least include academic credit for internships. ACEJMC agrees. It developed Standard 7 to guide schools in offering internships for credit (ACEJMC, 1997).

However, other researchers contend that payment is the best compensation for an intern's work. Basow and Byrne (1993) found that interns receiving payment evaluated their internships higher. Moreover, Beard (1997) found that "even token payment appears to lead to many positive consequences, such as reduced physical and mental stress for students and a more positive outlook toward the value of the internship" (p. 18).

Other writers suggest that monetary compensation leads to more successful internships for four reasons. First, it reminds students that they are entering the "real world" and should treat the internship like a job (Beard, 1997; Hamilton, 1992). Second, it implies a commitment on the part of the sponsoring organization to make the internship meaningful (Hamilton). Third, it helps students offset the loss of income from other part-time jobs (Beard; Berger, 1992). Fourth, it helps students justify an internship to parents, who are often bearing much of the financial costs for college and who may discourage students from doing unpaid internships (Berger).

Outcomes

An extensive body of research, conducted in a variety of professional disciplines, suggests that the success of an internship might be appropriately evaluated using five constructs. These include the following: (a) acquisition of technical skills, (b) career-related benefits, (c) career focus, (d) acquisition of interpersonal skills, and (e) outcomes of a more practical nature.

Acquisition of technical skills. The acquisition of technical, work-related skills is almost synonymous with the notion of "internship." College graduates are increasingly competing with the underemployed and victims of corporate layoffs, who already possess substantial work skills. It is not surprising, then, that Beard (1997) found that all his study respondents "recognized the importance of the intern gaining 'real world' experience from the internship, including technical job skills" (p. 6).

Career benefits. For students, career benefits include (a) improving prospects for obtaining entry-level jobs (Horowitz, 1996; Perlmutter & Fletcher, 1996), (b) obtaining mentors (Basow & Byrne, 1993; Verner, 1993), (c) acquiring a new recognition of the relevance of college course work, (d) attending regular professional development seminars and participating in mock interviews (Brightman, 1989, Farinelli & Mann, 1994), (e) gaining an understanding of the "differences between academic and professional life," (f) gaining an understanding of "office politics and protocol," (g) developing prioritization and organization skills, (h) developing a professional attitude, (i) developing a portfolio, and (j) networking (Bourland-Davis et al., 1997, p. 31).

Career focus. Another benefit presumed to accrue to students includes greater focus on a career path (Perlmutter & Fletcher, 1996). Career focus includes a recognition of the vocational abilities students should be able to offer future employers, as well as those they will need to be successful in their careers (Taylor, 1992). Thus, career focus is believed to lead to more positive beliefs about the intern's career choice and is also believed to be correlated with future job satisfaction (Taylor).

Acquisition of interpersonal skills. Some researchers have noted the importance of internships in developing students' interpersonal skills (Beard, 1997) and adjusting to the culture and climate of the professional workplace (Campbell & Kovar, 1994). In fact, after their internships, many students "report a newfound appreciation for the interpersonal and communication skills required of the professional in the workplace" (Beard, p. 6).

Practical outcomes. Beard (1997) found that, while gaining "real world" job experience is an important outcome of an internship, tangible evidence of this experience is equally important. Thus, practical outcomes include materials for portfolios and job interviews, personal references, and simply being able to demonstrate the use of common workplace technologies, such as fax machines and copiers.

Research Purpose and Questions

The overall purpose of this study is to explore and assess the nature and strength of the relationship between the characteristics of interns and internships (as predictors) and intern evaluations of the positive outcomes by which they assessed the success of their internships (as criterions). Thus, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

Question 1: What proportion of advertising and PR students experience an internship that has beneficial outcomes?

Question 2: To what extent does a relationship exist between the predictors of a successful internship and positive outcomes?

Question 3: What is the proportion of variance in internship outcomes that is predictable from knowledge of internship and intern characteristics?

Question 4: Which of the characteristics of internships and interns are most highly predictive of successful internship outcomes?

Method

Data were gathered from a national sample of advertising and PR students. It was not possible to construct a sampling frame of all advertising and PR interns, both for-credit and not-for-credit, and to sample randomly from it. However, given the goals of this study, which are more analytical in nature, a purposive sample consisting of students who had recently completed internships was deemed appropriate. Thus, respondents were identified by first identifying and contacting academic internship supervisors and coordinators at the 102 accredited JMC programs listed in the ACEJMC annual publication (1997).

Academic internship supervisors were asked to return response cards indicating whether or not they would be willing and able to participate in the survey. Of the 102 accredited schools, four responded that they either did not offer advertising and/or PR courses or did not manage internships in a "formal" sense. These were eliminated from the population, leaving a population of 98 programs.

Twenty-four of the contacted programs agreed to administer the survey to students who would complete an internship during Summer 1997, gather the completed questionnaires, and return them to the study's investigators. Thus, the survey produced a response rate of 24% at the program level. As an inducement, internship supervisors were offered a summary of the results from the entire sample and a custom breakout, so they could compare the results for just their students with those of the national sample. The participating 24 programs produced a total of 193 survey intern respondents.

Measures

The survey instrument was a self-administered questionnaire, consisting of three major sections: (a) assessment of predictors, (b) assessment of criterions, and (c) demographic and other descriptive data. A five-point, Likert-type response, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), was used to construct multi-item, composite scales. The instrument was pretested among a sample of advertising and PR interns, prior to its use in the survey. Some items were revised to improve clarity and scale reliability.

Predictors. Six items were used to measure the extent to which interns believed they were academically prepared for their internships (e.g., "My college courses gave me the skills I needed to perform well on my internship"). The extent that interns reported being proactive and aggressive during their internships (e.g., "I often volunteered for tasks during my internship") was assessed using four items.

Four items assessed the positive attitudes interns held toward the internship as both a learning and work experience opportunity (e.g., "I treated my internship like a real job"). The quality of the intern's supervision and effectiveness of his or her supervisor were assessed with eight items (e.g., "My supervisor considered my interests and goals and adapted the internship accordingly").

Organizational practices and policies were assessed using six items (e.g., "My work was very similar to that of a full-time, entry-level employee"). Finally, whether a respondent received some form of monetary compensation was included in the analysis as a dummy variable.

Outcomes. The extent to which students reported that the experience led to the acquisition of technical job skills was assessed with five items (e.g., "I got lots of 'hands-on' experience"). Four items measured the extent to which the internship provided career-related benefits (e.g., "I developed a mentor relationship with someone during my internship").

Four items were used to assess the career-focus benefits of the internship (e.g., "I now have a better focus on where my career is going"). The acquisition of interpersonal skills was assessed with three items (e.g., "I improved my interpersonal skills when it comes to working with others"). Other practical outcomes resulting from the internship—e.g., "I completed projects I can use in my portfolio"—were assessed with five items.

The predictor and outcome items were subjected to two separate principal components factor analyses (varimax and oblimin rotations), prior to their use in scale construction. Some items were deleted from the analysis when they failed to discriminate among the factors in the solutions. The scales were then constructed by categorizing the remaining items, summing the item scores, and dividing by the number of items in each scale. Basic scale characteristics and reliabilities are reported in Table 1. Reliability coefficients for all the scales in the study indicate acceptable reliability, with Cronbach *alphas* ranging from .60 to .91 (Nunnally, 1978).

Insert Table 1 about here

Demographic and Other Descriptive Items. The final section of the questionnaire included whether interns received some form of monetary compensation, whether they received academic credit, declared major, type of internship worksite, sex, GPA, and race.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to assess the demographics of the sample and to answer research question 1: What proportion of advertising and PR students experience an internship that has beneficial outcomes? Canonical correlation analysis was used to answer research questions 2 - 4: (2) to assess the strength of the relationship between the set of predictor variables and the set of criterion variables, (3) to determine what proportion of variance in successful internships is accounted for by the predictors, and (4) to identify the predictors that are most highly predictive of a successful internship.

Canonical correlation analysis, as opposed to simple bivariate correlation analysis or multiple regression analysis, was used in this study because the principal concern is with the structural relationships between the two sets of data holistically, and not in the associations between individual variables or the prediction of a single criterion variable (Clark, 1975; Levine, 1977).

For those unfamiliar with canonical correlation, the procedure works in such a way as to produce pairs of canonical variates—linear composites of the original variable scores for both sets of variables—that have maximum correlation (Tucker & Chase, 1980). In other words, the canonical variates represent the combination of variables in one set that have the highest possible correlation with a combination of variables in the other set (Levine, 1977). Pairs of canonical variates (called "roots") are extracted successively, each pair having a smaller canonical correlation than the preceding pair, as the subsequent pair accounts for residual variance not accounted for by the preceding pairs. The total possible number of roots is equal to the number of variables in the smaller of the two sets.

One of the advantages of canonical correlation is that each successive root represents a pair of linear combinations between the two sets of variables that may represent a statistically significant and independent pattern of relationships between the two sets.

The canonical correlation coefficient (**R***c*) measures the strength of the relationship between the variates in a root and is, in fact, the Pearson product-moment correlation between the two variates (Tucker & Chase, 1980). The coefficient is a direct measure of the strength of the relationship between the two sets of variables. The statistical significance of a root's **R***c* is tested using Bartlett's X^2, with a null hypothesis of a zero correlation between the variates.

As in factor analysis, the dimensions, or content, of the canonical variates may be interpreted. Many statisticians and methodologists (Clark, 1975; Tucker & Chase, 1980) advocate interpreting the nature of the variates by examining the correlations of the original variables in a set with the variate. These correlations are termed "loadings" (or canonical variates) and are interpreted in much the same way as variable loadings in factor analysis. In addition, the variable with the highest loading in a set is the variable that most highly predicts the variate in the opposite set.

Finally, measurement overlap, or variance explained, between the two sets of variables is assessed using a redundancy index (Tucker & Chase, 1980). Although the canonical procedure produces a measure of the variance shared by the two *variates* in a root ($\mathbf{R}c^2$), research interest is typically focused on the extent to which the two sets of *variables* overlap, which is measured by the redundancy index. In this study, the redundancy index is used to assess the amount of variance in successful internship outcomes that is predictable from a knowledge of the characteristics of interns and their internships.

Results

The results indicate that most interns in the sample completed their internships with high evaluations of their success. In addition, the results of the canonical analysis reveal that (a) the sets of predictor and criterion variables are highly correlated, (b) that the predictor variables account for almost one-half the variance in the criterion set, and

(c) that quality of supervision is the most important predictor variable. These results are discussed in greater depth below, following a description of the study's sample.

The Sample

In terms of degree area, the largest proportion of respondents declared themselves PR majors (60.6%), followed by advertising (25.4%), and "other" (14.4%). Becker and Kosicki's (1997) most recent survey of journalism and mass communication enrollments reveals that, of the total students enrolled in advertising and PR, 46.1% are in PR, 39.7% are in advertising, and 14.2% are in combined programs. Thus, advertising students are somewhat underrepresented in the present sample.

Almost all the respondents received academic credit for their internships (95.3%); with 58% receiving some form of monetary compensation. The most common internship site was a PR/advertising agency (25.8%), followed by "other" (22.8%), and business/industry (18%). Females represented a greater proportion of respondents (82.4%) than the most recent survey of JMC undergraduates (Becker & Kosicki, 1997 = 59.4% female respondents) or a recent survey of a large midwestern university's JMC graduates (Horowitz, 1997 = 73% female respondents). Thus, females are somewhat overrepresented in the sample.

Similarly, a larger proportion of respondents (89.5%) classified themselves as "white" than in Becker and Kosicki's 1997 survey (79.3% white graduates). Finally, respondents reported a mean GPA of 3.28.

Research Questions

RQ 1: What proportion of advertising and PR students experience an internship that has beneficial outcomes? The majority of interns agreed that their internships were successful, based on agreement scores of 4.00 and above on a scale of agreement of

1.00 to 5.00. The largest proportion (75.2%) agreed that their internships helped them to acquire interpersonal skills. The smallest proportion (59.8%) agreed that the internship successfully gave them greater career focus. Interns agreeing that their internships were successful in producing other outcomes fell within this 15-point range: acquisition of technical skills = 70.1%, career benefits = 69%, and practical outcomes = 65.3%.

When the results above are combined with the mean scores on the outcomes scales (Table 1), it is evident that interns assessed the successful outcomes resulting from their internships very highly. Mean agreement scores on the outcomes scales are above 4.00 on every outcome.

RQ 2: To what extent does a relationship exist between the predictors of a successful internship and positive outcomes? The canonical analysis produced two statistically significant roots. However, Root 2 had a **R***c* of less than .30, the rule-of-thumb for meaningful interpretation (Tucker & Chase, 1980). In addition, the variance of the successful internship outcome variables explained by the predictors in Root 2 was trivial (.006). Thus, further interpretation of the results are confined to the findings contained in the first root.

The first root resulting from the canonical analysis is shown in Table 2. Root 1 indicates that the sets of predictor and criterion variables are highly and significantly correlated ($\mathbf{R}c = .84$, $X^2 = 233.056$, $p < .0001$). The interpretation of canonical variates typically involves focusing on the variable loadings with the highest absolute values (Tucker & Chase, 1980). Thus, it is clear that the Set 1 variate is somewhat dominated by the quality of supervision variable, although the organizational practices and policies and positive attitude variables substantially define the variate and are also highly correlated with it. Likewise, academic preparedness is substantially correlated with the variate.

Interestingly, an intern's proactivity/aggressiveness and whether or not he or she received compensation for the internship are not correlated as highly with the successful outcomes measured by the Set 2 variables. However, the magnitudes of their loadings do indicate that they are moderately correlated with successful internship outcomes.

Insert Table 2 about here

Set 2 loadings are dominated by practical outcomes and the acquisition of technical skills, although the very high loadings for all the variables define a variate that uniformly captures the concept of a "successful internship."

The loadings of the variables in both sets, as well as the consistent directions of the coefficient signs, makes interpretation of the variates and their relationships straightforward. Interns who rate the quality of internship supervision high, organizational practices and policies high, rate themselves high in terms of positive attitude, and who rate themselves moderately high on academic preparedness—tend also to rate the quality of their internships higher on every dimension.

RQ 3: What is the proportion of variance in internship outcomes that is predictable from knowledge of internship and intern characteristics? The redundancy of Set 2 (outcomes) given Set 1 (predictors) is .48. In sum, approximately one-half of the success of an internship, as measured in this study, is predictable from a knowledge of the variables in the predictor set.

RQ 4: Which of the characteristics of internships and interns are most highly predictive of successful internship outcomes? It is clear that quality of supervision is the most important single predictor variable of the general "good internship" variate described by the variables in the criterion set. However, it is also clear that all the predictor variables are predictive of an intern's overall evaluation of successful outcomes resulting from his or her internship. The importance of the predictors, after quality of supervision (based on the magnitudes of their loadings), are organizational practices/policies, positive attitude, academic preparedness, proactivity/aggressiveness, and compensation, in that order.

Discussion

Given the importance of an internship to the future career of an advertising or PR student, it is encouraging to discover that such a large proportion of students had what they believe to be a successful internship. This is consistent with other research on JMC interns, such as Horowitz's study (1997), which found that the mean satisfaction score, on a one-to-ten scale, with 10 rated as "excellent," was 8.45. Conversely, the frequency of unsuccessful internships that led Perlmutter and Fletcher (1996) to ask: "Why do so many fail? Why do horror stories abound?" (p. 5), may, fortunately, not be all that frequent.

The high ratings of internship success reported by the respondents to this survey suggest that granting academic credit for internships is appropriate. Furthermore, since the sample consists of students enrolled in ACEJMC-accredited JMC programs, which are presumably following ACEJMC internship guidelines, the results suggest that these guidelines may be contributing substantially to successful internships.

It is important to note, however, that a far smaller proportion of students agreed that their internships led to an increase in career focus. At first, this result might suggest a need for improvement. However, it is also important to remember that many students use internships to test different career possibilities, and may, in fact, reject some career paths based on the outcomes of these internships. Thus, such internships may not necessarily lead to improvements in career focus, yet be beneficial.

The results of this study represent substantial progress in the effort to understand specifically what needs to happen during an internship in order for it to lead to successful outcomes. Although the literature had certainly suggested the predictors of a successful internship, this study confirms their importance. Furthermore, the results empirically confirm how much of a successful internship can be predicted from a knowledge of these predictors.

Citing De Mott (1972), Basow and Byrne (1993) note that "Most media managers and executives try to make such internships meaningful learning experiences for the students involved. . ." (p. 48). The moderately high evaluations of both supervisor effectiveness and organizational practices and policies found in this study support this conclusion. However, because the quality of supervision and organizational practices and policies regarding internships proved to be the best predictors of a successful internship, this study indicates that JMC programs need to concentrate more on training internship supervisors and helping students select quality worksites.

It is also important to note the very high correlation between the positive attitude variable and successful internships. This result strongly suggests that students should be encouraged to treat their internships like real jobs. They need to dress appropriately, be on time, and be at the worksite when they are scheduled to be there.

In sum, many of the results of this study indicate that successful internships depend most on predictors to which JMC programs appear to give the least time and attention. Most programs require that interns have a certain number of completed credits with an acceptable grade point average. Yet, such academic preparedness proved considerably less important than other predictors for which most programs are not presently controlling. For instance, few programs consider students' attitudes when deciding if they are ready for an internship, and even fewer require that students intern with only approved worksites and supervisors. In this respect, it is important to note that the respondents to this survey rated quality of supervision and organizational practices and policies good, but these ratings were lower that those of the other variables used to describe themselves and their internships.

In other words, the results suggest that implementing requirements regarding the selection of worksites and supervisors, and encouraging students to treat their internships like real jobs, should improve internships more than requirements regarding interns' academic preparedness or proactivity/aggressiveness, which are not as highly correlated with successful internships.

Supervisors should be trained to provide specific direction, examples, and positive, constructive feedback. They should encourage interns' autonomy and independence, and provide opportunities for interns to utilize their education in tasks that are compatible with the intern's future career goals. Of course, they should be knowledgeable and well-respected in the field for which the intern is educated.

In deciding whether to approve a worksite, JMC programs should consider whether the organization is implementing appropriate practices and policies regarding interns. Organizations should plan to provide students with an experience that approximates that of a full-time employee. They should provide tasks and projects on which interns can practice and hone their skills, rather than just doing busy work. The internship should involve interns in decision making and planning and give them opportunities to work on whole projects from beginning to end. At the least, it should provide interns the opportunity to work with full-time employees in such a way that interns understand how their work contributes to a whole project.

However, it is important to note that proactivity/aggressiveness and compensation are moderately correlated with successful internship outcomes. These results suggest that students should continue to be encouraged to volunteer for assignments, ask questions, and to be aggressive about making their wants and needs known. Similarly, JMC programs should encourage organizations wanting interns to pay them. Beard (1997) contends that the payment doesn't have to be much. Just paying students' tuition for the internship credit can have a positive influence on interns' perceptions of their internships. However, the fact that monetary compensation is only moderately associated with successful internships is probably a result of interns' willingness to accept unpaid internships as "part of paying their dues."

Study Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

One limitation of the present study is the generalizability of the results. The study should be replicated with a random sample, and including other JMC disciplines, as well as programs that are not accredited by ACEJMC. Such a study would help address an important question: Does the ACEJMC standard requiring programs to plan, monitor and evaluate for-credit internships contribute to their success? Similarly, is there any difference in positive outcomes for for-credit internships compared to not-for-credit internships?

A second limitation is the study's reliance on a self-administered survey questionnaire, which can be susceptible to various sources of error. Interested researchers might consider obtaining objective evaluations of internship success directly from internship supervisors.

Third, there is clearly room for improvement in the psychometric properties of some of the predictor and outcomes scales developed for this study. Although all the scales indicated acceptable levels of internal reliability, measurement of the positive attitude, proactivity/aggressiveness, and practical outcomes constructs can be improved.

Finally, it is important to note that canonical correlation, as a mathematical maximization technique, can produce inflated results. Similarly, Tucker and Chase (1980) note that "canonical structures may be highly unstable from sample to sample. . ." (p. 223). Thus, the validity and reliability of the present results should be assessed with a replication, repeating the study on a comparable sample.

Table 1

Basic Scale and Variable Characteristics: Means, Standard Deviations, and Scale Reliability Estimates

Scale	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*alpha*
1. Academic Preparedness	3.90	.75	191	.78
2. Proactivity/ Aggressiveness	4.18	.63	193	.64
3. Positive Attitude	4.37	.56	192	.60
4. Quality of Supervision	3.80	.96	188	.91
5. Organizational Practices/ Policies	3.77	.83	191	.81
6. Acquisition of Technical Skills	4.20	.74	193	.87
7. Career Benefits	4.17	.70	193	.76
8. Career Focus	4.07	.71	192	.82
9. Acquisition of Interpersonal Skills	4.24	.68	193	.79
10. Practical Outcomes	4.06	.74	189	.67

Note: Number of respondents (*n*) varies due to missing responses.

Table 2

Canonical Structure (Root 1): Internship Predictors and Criterions

Scales	Loadings	Canonical Variate Standardized Coefficients
Predictor Scales		
1. Academic Preparedness	-.502	-.175
2. Proactivity/Aggressiveness	-.387	-.086
3. Positive Attitude	-.753	-.299
4. Quality of Supervision	-.895	-.571
5. Organizational Practices	-.784	-.131
6. Compensation	-.301	-.133
Criterion Scales		
1. Acquisition of Technical Skills	-.905	-.370
2. Career Benefits	-.879	-.318
3. Career Focus	-.756	.016
4. Acquisition of Interpersonal Skills	-.662	-.031
5. Practical Outcomes	-.911	-.415

Rc = .84, Rc^2 = .70, X^2 = 233.056, df = 30, $p < .0001$. Redundancy: Set 2 given Set 1 = 48%.

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Running head: SERVICE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Evaluating Outcomes: Service Learning in the Communication Discipline

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Second Prize Winner, Teaching Standards Competition
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Evaluating Outcomes: Service Learning in Mass Communication Courses

Abstract

Although educators are increasingly recognizing that service learning and communication curricula can be a good match, research to date has not firmly established the link between service learning experiences and actual learning outcomes. This study investigated whether participation in communication classes taught as service learning contributed to two learning objectives: mastering course content and an enhancing a sense of citizenship. A questionnaire was administered to 153 students in eight courses taught within a communication department over three academic quarters. Results showed that service learning was positively related to both mastery of course content and development of citizenship: 75% agreed that the service helped them understand basic concepts and theories of the subject matter, and 70% agreed that the class helped them become more aware of community problems. Anecdotal evidence from student reflection papers supported these findings.

Communication educators across the country have begun to incorporate service learning into courses as varied as photography, news reporting, and organizational communication. Service learning — an innovative pedagogy that takes students into the community in order to provide a needed service to organizations as well as to enhance academic learning — has witnessed a tremendous surge in popularity in recent years. Numerous disciplines have integrated service learning into their curricula, prompting academic conference sessions, an academic journal devoted to service learning, and a series of monographs.

Many educators have recognized that service learning and the often skills-oriented communication curriculum can be a good match, offering students a chance to put into practice course lessons. For example, students in public relations courses can write news releases for a struggling non-profit in need of publicity or can even produce an entire information campaign. Students learning about communication research can practice their skills by conducting focus groups for a public broadcasting station. Video production students can create short videos for organizations wanting to attract members or raise money.

Despite the obvious "fit" between communication curricula and service learning, and the apparent benefits to both students and community agencies, the literature on service learning has not done enough to link service learning experiences to actual learning outcomes — particularly within communication. This study examined the relationship between service learning and educational outcomes in multiple courses taught within a communication department.

Service Learning Literature

Although service learning has earned national attention in just the past two decades, its roots are often traced to John Dewey, who advocated the link between academic learning and the community (Giles & Eyler, 1994; Kunin, 1997). Indeed that link remains at the heart of the service learning movement today.

Defining service learning is no simple task, considering the number of practitioners engaging in the process in diverse contexts. While there have been over 100 recorded definitions of service learning (Olney & Grande, 1995; Jacoby, 1996), service learning commonly involves two components that distinguish it from student volunteering or community service: "(1) students engage in active reflection on their community experience, and (2) community learning is linked to academic learning" (Olney & Grande, 1995, p. 43).

This study uses a definition of service learning condensed from the National Community Service and Trust Act of 1993, and adopted by American Association of Higher Education:

> Service learning means a method under which students learn and develop a thoughtfully organized service that: is conducted in and meets the needs of a community and is coordinated with an institution of higher education and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students enrolled; and includes structured time for the students to reflect on the service experience.

An important distinction noted by scholars between general "volunteering" and established service learning programs is the potential for service learning to be better integrated into existing curricula. Wutzdorff and Giles (1997) viewed such integration as a primary strength of institutionalized service learning: "Our optimism is fueled by seeing so many solid programs grow from well-intentioned volunteerism to closely integrated components of institutional curricula" (p. 115).

However, despite the growing number of established service learning programs in universities and departments nationwide, relatively few scholars have documented the relationship between service learning and the educational outcomes that service is designed to enhance. Lipka (1997) is one scholar who observed that much research to date has not fully connected learning outcomes, noting that too many studies of service learning are unconnected and lack "a broad conceptual framework which explicates the theory, practice and current status of research of long-term effects of service learning" (p. 56). Although the spectrum of research has broadened considerably in the past decade, much of the service learning literature has not quantified learning outcomes, relying instead on qualitative and anecdotal evidence of students' reports of their service learning experiences (Kendall, 1998).

Of the research conducted to date, the primary benefits to students from their service learning participation include the development of social responsibility and values, a greater awareness of societal problems, and an ability to apply principles learned in class to new situations (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; McCarthy, 1996; Olney & Grande, 1995; Seigel, 1997; Wade, 1997). For example, Olney and Grande (1995) reported that student learning was linked to the "development of social responsibility, which includes a sense of the obligation of citizenship, awareness of social injustice and its complex causes, and dedication to working toward social equality" (p. 43).

Recently, there have been efforts to provide quantitatively derived evidence to support claims that service learning is correlated to student learning. Markus, Howard, and King (1993) conducted one such quantitative study in which service learning was incorporated into one large political science lecture class. The class' discussion groups were split into traditional (control) and service learning groups. The students in the service learning groups participated in a service experience instead of writing a term paper, which was the assignment for the students in the traditional discussion groups. Markus et al. (1993) found the following:

> Students in the service learning groups were significantly more likely than those in the traditional discussion sections to report that they had performed up to their potential in the course, had learned to apply principles from the course to new situations, and had developed a greater awareness of social problems (p. 410).

Although the authors did not fully explicate the measurement instruments used, they encouraged researchers in other disciplines to replicate their study (Markus et al., 1993). With careful attention to the type of measures used, replication of their study may provide additional quantitative support for the learning outcomes most associated with service learning.

The most extensive research conducted thus far regarding the value and effects of service in higher education was undertaken by researchers associated with UCLA and RAND (Gray, Geschwind, Ondaatje, Robyn, Klein, Sax, Astin, & Astin, 1996). This comprehensive research was a national, longitudinal study of nearly 3,500 students at 42 institutions. The major findings concerned three service learning constituents: the community, the academy, and students engaged in service learning. The researchers discovered that community organizations found students contributions to be valuable, and academic institutions continued to develop service learning programs, resulting in improved community relations. The UCLA / RAND researchers also discovered relationships between service learning experiences and learning outcomes:

> Participation in service was associated with gains in student learning and development. Students participating in service showed greater increases in civic responsibility, academic achievement, and life skills than did nonparticipating students (Gray et al., p. 70).

Although scholars, such as the UCLA / RAND researchers, are beginning to answer the call for more research investigating the links between service learning and learning outcomes, there are still many questions facing communication scholars.

Research Questions

This study took a closer look within the communication curriculum at the relationship between two objectives identified in the literature as integral to service learning: course content and citizenship.

RQ 1: Does participation in a class taught as service learning help students learn course content? Additional dimensions of learning course content include a student's motivation to study harder and to attend class more regularly.

"Participation" in a service learning class takes place on several levels. In addition to attending class, learning course content, and completing a course project, participants in these service learning courses were required to perform service hours, and to participate in reflection activities.

RQ 2: Is participation in a class taught as service learning linked to the development of citizenship?

Citizenship has been defined in a multitude of ways (Olney & Grande, 1995), including an awareness of social issues, a commitment to democratic ideals, and the development of civic responsibility. In this study, an awareness of community problems, a greater sense of personal responsibility toward the community, and an interest in solving community problems were all considered aspects of citizenship.

Methods

To answer the research questions, a questionnaire was administered to 153 students enrolled in service-learning designated[1] courses in the Department of Communication at the University of Utah over three quarters. The service learning questionnaire was administered near the end of the quarter and was distinct from the normal course evaluations. Eight service learning-designated courses were offered Winter, Spring, and Autumn quarters in 1997: three Communication Research classes (taught by different instructors), three Organizational Communication classes (taught by different instructors), one Corporate Video Production class, and one Public Relations Campaigns class. The questionnaire administered to each class consisted of 13 scale questions, 1 open-ended question, and 9 demographic questions (see Appendix A).

Students in these service learning classes mastered course content both in class and experientially by creating projects for non-profit agencies. Examples include public relations campaigns produced for non-profits during a PR class, and surveys conducted for non-profits in a research class. Students worked with a variety of community agencies, such as the Cancer Wellness House, Easter Seals, HawkWatch, Horizonte Instruction and Training Center, Repertory Dance Theater, and the Utah Society for Environmental Education. Examples of the types of student projects included PR campaigns and videos for Habitat for Humanity, Ronald McDonald House, and Special Olympics; questionnaires for the Utah Food Bank and the Utah Education

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[1] These courses were selected for inclusion in this study because each had been officially designated as service learning courses through an approval process governed by the Lowell Bennion Community Service Center, the hub for service learning at the University of Utah. Service-learning designated courses are listed as such in the course catalog, and each officially designated course is required to administer a standard questionnaire evaluating the service component that was developed by the Bennion Center.

Network; and an internal communication plan for the Utah Council for Crime Prevention.

Because class sizes were generally small (ranging from 25 in Communication Research to 12 in Corporate Video Production), results were analyzed as an aggregate, an acceptable methodological choice given the standardized questionnaire administered to each class.

Results and Discussion

Questionnaire Results

RQ 1: Does participation in a class taught as service learning help students learn course content?

Three questions from the survey measured the content dimension: whether service helped students understand basic course concepts, whether service activities made students more interested in attending class, and whether service activities made students interested in studying harder. As illustrated in Table 1, about 75% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the service helped them understand the basic concepts and theories of the subject. In the eight classes studied here, these data supported what previous researchers had found: the service learning experience helped students to learn the course material.

Students were more evenly split, however, as to whether or not the service activities made them more motivated. In fact, more students felt neutral than agreed that the service increased their motivation to either attend class (40% neutral and 33 % agree or strongly agree) or to study harder (33% neutral to 28% agree or strongly agree). This suggests that although service learning makes sense — particularly in skills-based communication courses — and helps students better understand theoretical content in applied, practical situations, it may have little effect on students' motivation or work habits.

There were no significant differences according to the demographic variables (such as gender, marital status, or employment status) for either the content or the citizenship questions, with one exception. If students had taken a previous service learning course, they were significantly (Chi-square = 12.2, p = .01) more likely to strongly agree or agree that the service helped them understand the current course's concepts and theories. This suggests that "repeat" service learning participants have an even stronger understanding than first-time participants of how the service component contributes to their understanding of course material. This is good news for institutionalized, university-based service learning centers, who have attempted to introduce service learning into a variety of disciplines across campus — from architecture to zoology — and to expose as many students as possible to the experience.

RQ 2: Is participation in a class taught as service learning linked to the development of citizenship?

Three other questions from the survey measured the dimension of citizenship. As shown in the bottom of Table 1, about 70% of the students strongly agreed or agreed that the service learning class helped them become more aware of community problems. Over half of the students strongly agreed or agreed with the other two questions: roughly 56% said the class helped them become more interested in solving community problems, and about 60% said the experience contributed to a greater sense of personal responsibility toward the community.

An additional question asked in the survey found that the students recognized the value of their contributions: about 80% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the service they performed provided a needed service to the organization and community (see question 1 in Appendix A). Although agencies have been telling their university contacts that service learning projects aid them immensely, these data confirm that students are aware of the value of their contribution. And does students' service contribution translate into a heightened sense of citizenship and civic responsibility for them? These data suggest that it does. Relatively high agreement by students with the citizenship learning measures suggests that educators are perhaps teaching much more than course material when they teach a class as service learning. And this is good news — for educators, for students as citizens of the future, and of course, for the agencies who benefit from their good works.

As Table 2 illustrates, all of the survey questions were significantly correlated within their respective dimensions, which is expected for items that are attempting to measure related concepts. Many questions also were correlated to items in the other dimension, with one interesting exception. The question of whether service helped students learn basic course concepts lacked much of a relationship to the three citizenship questions, although citizenship measures were positively associated with motivation for attending class and studying harder. It may be that the connection to community gained through the service may make the class more interesting (and thus motivate attendance or work habits), but it may not necessarily have a strong, automatic relationship to understanding course material. If this finding holds true in subsequent studies and research sites, it may be helpful for communication instructors to do a more thorough job of tying the service components to the basic concepts and theories of the subject matter.

Descriptive Results

Although this research was primarily concerned with quantifying the link between service learning and educational outcomes as found in the survey data, some anecdotal evidence provides additional support for student learning along the two identified dimensions of course content and citizenship. Some of the evidence comes directly from the clients, and some evidence comes from the students in the form of "reflection papers."

Similar to previous findings (Gray et al., 1996), the community agencies used in this study highly valued the student products. But these agencies also noted that the citizenship displayed by some students continued after the actual course had ended. In the words of the agency representative from Habitat for Humanity:

> Thank you for allowing Habitat to be a part of your service learning project. Your students changed our Habitat! Now we have a PR plan, a brochure and video to promote our organization.... We didn't have the money or the knowhow. . . Many of the students have since become dedicated volunteers to Habitat for Humanity.

A representative from Utah Special Olympics reported:

> The volunteer hours had a tremendous value. The project took on a reality after the volunteer time. Special Olympics was no longer just a concept, but they [the students] were able to put faces and people into the idea of Special Olympics. Volunteering heightens their awareness of our organization as well as showing them the benefits of community service.

Evidence of learning outcomes also was noted by students in "reflection" exercises, a required component in each officially designated service learning course at the University. Reflection is a common component of service learning, as indicated by its inclusion in the American Association of Higher Education definition of service learning used in this study. The process of reflection is designed to assist students in making connections between the service in which they are engaged and what they learn from it, such as course content and citizenship. Reflection enabled each student to consider his or her agency and the social issues that agency addresses, often in a way that linked the service with the course content. In this study, journals, short papers, and written responses to quotes or questions were methods of reflection used. In-class discussions, either in small groups or as a whole class, provided a forum for students to share their experiences and opinions with their classmates. In a final reflection paper, one communication student explained:

> ...I enjoyed the reflection papers. I felt that this was a good exercise for me in organizing and discussing my personal experiences with my client organization. I felt that it served as a reinforcement in understanding why I was doing the action in the first place. Along with the papers, I enjoyed the reflection sessions that we participated in... Even though people are generally shy about sharing experiences, I think that our class was eager to share different things that were happening in our different settings.

Students reported that the process of reflection facilitated their learning of both course content and citizenship dimensions. One student said, "[The] service learning class is really helpful for making application between the class material and the work we are doing for the organization. By doing so, we understand the material more effectively and have a chance to help the community."

A student in the video production class made a strong connection between his learning course content and the service experience:

> The service hours donated by me and the rest of the group should help us a great deal with the actual video production. First of all, it helps us get to know the people we are working with much better. It takes the relationship a little deeper and it helps us see the people we are working with as more than just clients. It helps us gain an understanding of how the organization works and the importance of community volunteers and donations.

Another student summarized her service learning experience in a public relations class, defining in her own words the meaning of service and citizenship:

> Service is something you do to help someone else. It is a gift that needs no recognition and no thanks. I believe it should be an unwritten rule to serve others. It is our responsibility to serve and help others in whatever way we can whenever we can, without glorifying ourselves. This is what service means to me, and, in my opinion, this view should be stressed more in classes.

Reflection has been described as the "glue" that binds service to learning, and, as seen by these excerpts, was an important and integral component of the service learning experience.

Limitations

Although this study presented quantitative results regarding important learning objectives identified in the literature, it has specific limitations. First, the instrument used was a simple, self-report questionnaire that did not fully tap the rich data that are potentially available, such as the student reflection papers.

While this study has depth in terms of multiple classes, that also presents a potential limitation. Because the sample consisted of eight classes of relatively small sizes, no attempt was made to isolate factors related to the type of course taught or who was teaching it. For example, students' experiences may have been affected by having an instructor they didn't care for or by an agency representative who was less responsive or organized. A carefully executed experimental design could better control for factors related and unrelated to the service experience, such as the variation in projects, agencies, and instructors. An experiment could, for example, have one instructor teach two sections of the same course during the same quarter, teaching one as service learning and one traditionally. A similar design was employed by Markus et al. (1993), who divided discussion sections within the same course into both "traditional" and service learning.

A Research Agenda for Service Learning in Communication

Despite the fact that numerous communication educators have been utilizing service learning, both formally and informally, more data are needed to support claims that service learning is a worthwhile endeavor that helps students learn both course content and valuable citizenship lessons. The anecdotal evidence suggests that it is, but much more research is needed.

Like any new, innovative classroom pedagogy, service learning has generated a great deal of praise and enthusiasm. Communication educators have been among those singing its praises, convinced of service learning's potential to more deeply engage students in course material and touting the socially responsible partnerships it builds between students and the community in which they live. While our experiences here with service learning have likewise been positive, like other scholars we recognize that the pedagogy has limitations and problems (Perkins, Kidd, & Smith, 1998), particularly for those who jump in without prior experience and with high expectations. We have already argued that more definitive research needs to be conducted regarding the pedagogy's ability to affect educational outcomes, but other research is called for as well.

For example, what about students who respond negatively to service learning? What are our pedagogical responsibilities toward students who question the appropriateness of teaching service and citizenship in higher education? Some students do not believe they should have to pay top tuition to be used as "free labor" when they could be using that time to earn income. Others have pointed out the irony of mandatory volunteering; "volunteer" hours are frequently required by instructors or required for service-learning designation. While the vast majority of students do not voice objections, this service requirement is resented by some; for example, one student in this study kept referring to his "service hours" as "servitude hours." As a response, various universities have instituted non-service alternatives, either within the same course or in a separate course section. Research is needed to fully investigate this important side of service learning and its potential negative impacts on students.

Research is also needed to see whether class instruction changes significantly as a result of service learning participation. For example, are there differences between traditionally- and service learning-taught courses in the amount of theoretical versus practical content, the choice of textbooks, and the amount and types of exams? Because academics have long feared the transformation of liberal arts institutions into "trade schools," it is important to investigate whether theoretical content "goes away" in order to turn out skills-oriented products for non-profit clients. Communication educators who have taught classes as service learning know first-hand the struggle to fit it all in within a regular quarter- or semester-length term — not just the regular course content, but also service hours, reflection assignments, client contact, and massive final projects. The extra work and time constraints involved in service learning instruction may well mean that something taught or done before may have to go by the wayside. Such instructional choices need to be much more carefully examined.

One way to supplement the type of information presented here would be a thorough qualitative analysis of reflection papers that students write about their service experiences, such as the brief examples presented here.

Communication research into service learning also would benefit greatly from combined quantitative-qualitative designs. Quantitative studies such as this one would benefit greatly if complemented by thorough, in-depth qualitative analysis of supporting materials, such as the student reflection papers excerpted here. These papers represent a rich database of students' frank assessments of the benefits and pitfalls of service versus traditional learning. Triangulation with the self-report questionnaires would add strength and richness to the quality of the data obtained. Because reflection normally takes places at several points during the term, reflection activities also allow a more precise tracking throughout the service experience.

Finally, research is needed to further explicate or move beyond the dimensions of content and citizenship previously identified in the literature and studied here. For example, the field of education has identified three dimensions of learning — affective, behavioral, and cognitive — that might prove useful to scholars interested in studying service learning within the communication discipline.

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Table 1

Service Learning Relationship to Learning Outcomes

Course Content

% F	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
Service helped me understand basic concepts, theories of subject.	24.5% (37)	50.3% (76)	14.6% (22)	7.9% (12)	2.6% (4)
Service activities made me more interested in attending class.	7.8% (12)	25.5% (39)	40.5% (62)	21.6% (33)	4.6% (7)
Service activities made me more interested in studying harder.	4.0% (6)	23.8% (36)	33.1% (50)	31.1% (47)	7.9% (12)
Citizenship					
This class made me more aware of community problems.	26.1% (40)	44.4% (68)	19.0% (29)	8.5% (13)	2.0% (3)
I developed greater sense personal responsibility toward community.	12.4% (19)	48.4% (74)	28.8% (44)	7.2% (11)	3.3% (5)
This class helped me become more interested in solving community problems.	13.8% (21)	42.1% (64)	30.9% (47)	11.2% (17)	2.0% (3)

Table 2
Correlation Matrix of Service Learning Evaluation Items

	2	3	4	5	6
1 .Service helped me understand basic concepts, theories of subject.	.33 **	.34**	.11	.21*	.07
2. Service activities made me more interested in attending class.		.62**	.33**	.53**	.30**
3. Service activities made me more interested in studying harder.			.31**	.48**	.38**
4. This class made me more aware of community problems.				.53**	.54**
5. I developed greater sense personal responsibility toward community.					.47**
6. The class helped me become more interested in solving community problems.					

Pearson product moment correlations.
* p = .05
** p = .01

Appendix A

Class ___________________________

Please mark which best describes your response to each of the following statements
Strongly Agree = SA Agree = A Neutral = N Disagree = D Strongly Disagree = SD

1. The service I did in this class provided a needed service to individuals, organizations, schools, or other entities in the community.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

2. Structured activities in the class provided me with a way to analyze issues about citizenship, social responsibility, or personal responsibility in my community.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

3. I developed a greater sense of personal responsibility towards my community in this course.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

4. This service helped me understand the basic concepts and theories of the subject.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

5. This course contributed to my ability to get involved with community organizations on my own.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

6. I would have learned more from this class if there had been more time spent in the classroom instead of doing service to the community.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

7. The service activities I performed in this class made me more interested in attending class.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

8. This class helped me become more aware of community problems.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

9. The service activities I performed in this class made me more interested in studying harder.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

10. This class helped me become more interested in helping to solve community problems.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

11. The course helped me bring the lessons I learned in the community back into the classroom.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

12. The course helped me understand the experience I had as a volunteer.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

13. Through the course I had the opportunity to share the experiences I had and the lessons I learned in the community with other students.
SA----------A---------N----------D-----------SD

(over)

Comments about the course or the service done through the class:

14. How many hours a week did you spend in service activities for this class?____ Hours/week

15. Age: _____

16. Gender:__ Male ___ Female

17. Are you currently employed? Yes No.
If yes, how many hours each week? __ Hours/week

18. Are you currently married?__Yes _No Number of children ___

19. What is your major?

20. What is your class status?
Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate Other

21. Have you taken service learning courses before? _Yes _No If yes, how many?

22. Were you doing service in your community before taking this class? _Yes _No
If yes, how many hours each week? Hours/week

23. Do you intend to continue volunteering after the quarter ends? _Yes _No

Textbooks and Teaching: A Lesson from Students

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Textbooks and Teaching: A Lesson from Students

ABSTRACT

This is the first depth probe of students' opinions about textbooks. Convenience samples of 568 students at two universities provides a general student view of textbooks that is compared with a national sample of 602 mass communication students, by sequence. The study confirms that students think textbooks are vital learning aids, and it identifies writing quality as the most important aspect of a text. The study offers teachers a prescription to use when selecting textbooks.

Textbooks and Teaching: A Lesson from Students

Doctoral degrees are awarded in curriculum and instruction. Compendia of strategies for improving classroom teaching performance are produced annually. Methods for interacting with students, raising their interest and increasing their achievement are taught in workshops, conferences and education classes across the nation. The only element in the teaching mix that receives little or no attention is the backbone of almost every college course: the textbook.[1]

This study is an assessment of college textbooks by the second most authoritative source: the students who use them. The investigation appraises the value of college texts as perceived by a general population of students at two U.S. universities. These general findings about texts are compared with findings about mass communication textbooks from a sample of such students at a wide variety of programs across the country.

The study offers a depth probe of the specific aspects of a textbook that college students say make it either a valuable learning tool or an impediment to learning. As perhaps the only study of its kind, and with a sample of 1,170, the findings offer some surprisingly satisfying outcomes for mass communication teachers and a prescription of what all teachers should consider before adopting a textbook.

Background

With so much riding on textbooks — most teachers expect students to devote half of the course time learning from the text, and teachers build their course content around the text — it is peculiar that so little information exists about college textbooks. An international body of literature exists on textbooks aimed at the primary and secondary school levels,[2] but very few empirical studies exist about college texts. This review will briefly assess textbooks' place in pre-college level studies, will present similar studies about college textbooks and mass communication texts, and will offer considerations about the content and presentation of college texts that underpin the study's research statements.

Pre-college studies. General trends in textbooks for pre-college students fluctuate with the trends in educational thinking. For example, in the last generation, the trend was toward greater synthesis and broader inclusion of subject matter while this generation lauds back-to-basics.[3] The prevailing trends affect textbooks first because the research shows that up to 90 percent of classroom time is structured around instructional material, with textbooks in the forefront.[4] Additional research shows that students spent 70-90 percent of their homework time with texts.[5]

Although college textbooks are subject to many of the same industry developments as pre-college texts, the latter group is driven by state agencies and political forces that determine school curricula.[6] These forces dictate writing style by readability formulas, often resulting in a prose that is stilted, choppy and generally bad writing.[7] Adoptions that require inclusion of women and racial minorities in photographs often do so with little relevance to the text material.[8] Aesthetics, such as cover, layout and color illustrations, designed to suggest quality, are often a proxy for quality.[9] Research shows that pre-college textbooks are poorly analyzed and selected.[10]

> Given the central role played by textbooks in schooling, one would expect that they would be a focus of debate about how to improve schooling...still missing from the reform debate is any acknowledgment that in many cases the textbook defines curriculum and the scope, sequence, and method of instruction. Also missing is the understanding that textbooks represent a nexus between institutional change, teacher professionalism, and improved student success.[11]

In all, the literature laments the lack of attention paid to textbooks in the teaching process.

College textbooks. Instructors at the college level have considerable latitude in selecting a text compared with their pre-college peers, and the research is clear about their instructional value. They serve as effective tools in improving the quality of education and have great influence on teaching and learning.[12]

For college teachers, texts develop guidance to the subject and can help measure how students' motivation is influenced by the nature of academic tasks in classrooms.[13] Textbooks provide uniform content for individual college students to study according to their own ability, motivate greater involvement and help instructors, especially the beginners, to design their courses.[14]

Students find textbooks easier to read than primary source material, which leads to higher "self-efficacy perceptions for understanding the course" and more "motivated behavior" for students. They are most affected when texts provide clear and comprehensible information that is neither too similar nor too contradictory to their current knowledge.[15]

Even for college classes, a text's readability is an important consideration. The same readability formulas used to assess mass media are employed for textbooks with nearly the same result: debate about the formulas' ability to determine a text's grade level and whether sentence structure equates to clarity of meaning.[16] Yet the text's reading level is considered extremely important to student success in a class.[17]

In all, the literature views college textbooks as being equally essential to students' understanding and achievement as those at pre-college levels, with the additional advantage that teachers have more responsibility in selecting texts.

Textbook content criteria. Because most college faculty do choose their own texts, what should they look for and what might students suggest about a helpful text? The content is divided into three areas: 1) the textual writing, 2) the cues that help interpret the writing, and 3) all other aspects of a textbook.

Of the three content dimensions, textual writing has received the most research attention because it deals with reading skills, readability and cognitive aspects of learning process. The research shows that writing promotes student interest by organizing and communicating the subject matter to readers.[18] Writing structure determines what students will learn, and the research has identified effective structures.[19] Other elements of writing have been examined, including use of concise examples with word orders that emphasize the connection between example and principle,[20] and format of presentation such as the number of arguments used to teach a principle.[21]

Cues designed to help interpret the writing are called directives and signals. Directives are aspects of the text that help students understand the expected learning goals. These include objectives at the beginning of chapters and questions at the end. Signals emphasize the important portions of the textual matter such as typographical cues such as boldface and italic type, "pointer" phrases in the text, numbered or bulleted items.[22] Interpreting cues are supposed to be less important than the writing itself, but more important than other aspects of a textbook.

The remaining aspects of a textbook are usually visual stimuli. These might include photographs, drawings, charts, tables and cartoons, graphic placement, etc.[23] Ancillaries such as study guides, workbooks, CD, etc., also constitute the remaining aspects.[24] None of the additional aspects of a textbook has received extensive research,[25] and the little that exists is contradictory in terms of whether these aspects aid or impede learning.

Communication Text Studies

The literature in this area is sparse. Those studies that were found can be grouped in two broad categories: 1) the content analyses that seek specific subject matter in the discipline and 2) a variety of other investigations.

Looking first at the content analyses, the commonalty is how recent these studies are and that most are in the speech communication area. These include: two studies by Rogers of business communication texts, Pelias' study of whether public speaking texts stress communication apprehension; the Allen and Preiss finding that public speaking/persuasion texts have little uniformity and fail to accurately summarize the literature; Robie's finding that four content areas were covered in texts, but that basic texts are not suitable for "new readers," and that texts should be a joint product of student and expert input; Posner's finding that traditional psychological theories dominated interpersonal communication texts; Gibson's report that introductory communication texts reduce scholarship to a few primary axioms; and the Hess and Pearson investigation of principles in basic public speaking texts and the relative importance given them.[26]

In the mass communication area, one of the earliest and most extensive was Shoemaker's review of introductory and issue-oriented mass communication texts.[27] Seeking a definition of the field, she studied 31 books and discussed their approach to teaching about the discipline based on content and authors' intent. Stark and Wyffels examined 26 journalism reporting textbooks and found that most of them failed to include intercultural reporting; Jowett reviewed communication technology content in mass media textbooks; Bekken found an anti-labor bias in reporting texts; Olasky looked at how public relations texts depict the general view others hold of the profession; Cline found an anti-public relations bias in introductory mass media books; Harrison found that public relations texts failed to include ethics; Morton explored how public relations textbooks cover fund raising and the context in which the subject is discussed; Kruckeberg found that public relations theories textbooks are divided into theoretical and applied chapter without much connection; Kern-Foxworth found little ethnic inclusion in public relations texts; and Hannon found more inclusion but that not much had changed over time.[28]

The other types of studies include: Christians' 1977 survey of media ethics courses, their approaches and textbooks used; Schneider's two readability studies of public speaking and interpersonal communication texts; and Stephens' 1979 survey of how journalism texts teach theory.[29]

Summary of Studies

What is evident from this review is that little scholarly analysis exists about textbooks. Studies from the pre-college levels indicate that the textbook industry influences what is produced for this large market, and that teachers have little control in selecting books they will use. The college market studies are more insightful, but hardly address student perceptions about texts. However, the college teacher has far more latitude in adoption. The communication field studies deal with issues about subject matter content and readability.

What all of the studies do report or imply is that textbooks are a crucial element in the teaching-learning situation. They are considered an integral part of the course structure, the way content is communicated, and they are conceded to be the instruments by which students, at all levels, do the majority of their studying. But little is known about students' perceptions of their texts, what they consider helpful and what they consider an interference to their learning.

Research Statements

Based on the limited research on college textbooks, the following research statements are offered:

1. Students' strong opinions about their texts confirm that they consider textbooks an important part of their college courses.

2. Students will be most concerned about a textbook's writing, then the cues that help interpret the writing, and lastly all other aspects of a textbook.

3. Students generally agree with one another about what constitutes a helpful textbook vs. what constitutes a textbook that interferes with learning.

4. Mass communication students' impressions of their texts will be similar to the impressions of a general sample of students.

5. Among mass communication students, those in advertising and broadcasting will rate the graphics in texts as more important than will those in news-editorial and public relations.

6. Other than the graphics distinction, all of the mass communication students will have similar impressions about their textbooks.

Method

Survey procedures. The study is a survey based on a convenience sample of students during late fall 1997 and early spring 1998. Two large universities provided the general population sample: Southern Illinios University at Carbondale, a public university; and the University of Miami in Florida, a private university. The surveys were intercepts done at campus gathering places by journalism undergraduates who were completing a class exercise. Students were instructed to survey on different days of the week, at different times of the day, and at a variety of campus locations. They were not allowed to survey anyone they knew.

A total of 308 surveys were completed at SIUC, and 260 surveys were completed at the Miami for a total general student sample of 568 respondents. The surveys were self-administered. Students handed a single sheet, front and back, to a subject who completed the form in less than five minutes. Minor problems in printed instructions on the SIUC questionnaire (which became missing data) were corrected for subsequent forms. No difficulties were reported by the surveyors, nor were any difficulties evident on the completed questionnaires.

Sampling procedures. The sample of mass communication students was selected to maximize generalizability from a convenience sample. Using the *1997-98 AEJMC Directory*, mass communication teachers were selected in the following manner: 1) their email address had to be in the directory, as this was the contact method; 2) they represented a wide variety of schools and programs, both public and private, from all areas of the United States; 3) they represented the four common mass communication sequences; 4) they were at schools not known for having many mass communication textbook authors on faculty; and, 5) they agreed to do surveys in their junior- and senior-level courses. Junior and senior classes were specified because this sample was expected to be smaller than the general student sample, and the subjects were being asked about all textbooks they had used in their sequence areas of advertising, broadcasting, news-editorial and public relations.

More than 30 faculty members either agreed to administer the survey to their class or offered a colleague's email if they did not teach an upper-division mass communication course. The listing provided (see Appendix 1 for Participants) is believed to be the widest possible convenience sample of mass communication students: advertising, 123; broadcasting, 179; news-editorial, 132; and public relations, 168; for a total sample of 602 mass communication students.

Questionnaire procedures. The questionnaires were directed specifically to each population studied by using different titles and changing all references to the specific textbooks being evaluated. For example, the general questionnaire was titled "Textbook Appraisal Questionnaire" and the questions began, "Of the college textbooks you have used...." The advertising form was titled "Advertising Textbook Appraisal Questionnaire" and the questions began, "Of the advertising textbooks you have used....", etc. Mass communication teachers were sent the number of forms they requested with a business-reply envelope. Most returned the completed forms within one month. The questionnaire type became the study's first variable, which included: the public school general, the private school general, advertising, broadcasting, news-editorial and public relations.

Questionnaire content. The questionnaires were structured based on the literature review and on a textbook writer's instructional text by Silverman.[30] (See Appendix 2 for Textbook Questionnaire). Because this was the first depth study of students' opinion about college textbooks, the first two questions were open-ended, asking students to think of helpful textbooks and name something most helpful (helped you learn), and then to think of least helpful texts and name something least helpful (did not help you learn). Using open-ended questions was imperative because all the remaining items about textbooks would have sensitized responses.

Few students were expected to write anything in the open-ended blanks, but more than half did, causing unanticipated coding difficulty. Nearly 60 categories were created to capture the richness of responses about helpful and non-helpful textbook aspects. In fact, each of the two questions had to be coded into a "first" and "second" answer given. Creating almost 30 categories for each open-ended item, and then coding the first and second responses, required several attempts to achieve intercoder reliability on these two items. Two paid coders, who did not know the study's hypotheses, achieved Kliphendorf alphas averaging near 80% before they began coding, again at one point in the middle of coding and as a check after finishing.[31] These results confirm high reliability of the coding procedure.

The textbook research literature, though scant, was sufficient to focus the rest of the assessment questions. Following the open-ended questions, respondents ranked their first, second and third choice among seven reasons a textbook was helpful. They next rated a set of eight items for interfering vs. helping with learning. Finally, they ranked first, second and third choice among seven reasons a textbook was distracting.

Another open-ended question offered students a chance to mention something they especially like or dislike that was not already mentioned in the survey. The student's major, classification, gender and age was recorded.

Combining the general samples. As is appropriate before combining separate samples, an analysis of the two general surveys was performed. It showed that students at SIUC were different from those at Miami, as might be expected. Statistically significant differences were found in classification (45% of the Miami students were freshmen vs. only 15% of those at SIUC); in age (Miami mean 19.8 vs. SIUC mean 20.7); and in major (Miami majors were more likely to be in the natural and social sciences). These differences were determined to be an advantage because they broadened the demographic base of the general student sample.

Twenty-six ratings about textbooks were compared across the two samples with only three statistically significant differences found. The SIUC students were more likely to identify both a good and a bad book or class (Miami students were less likely to specify), and rated the use of author citations in texts higher than did private school students, although both groups identified this aspect as the most interfering in the set of eight items.

Based on this analysis, the two general student surveys were combined to form a single general survey (568 cases): one that increased the range of college student demographics included but showed few differences in opinions about their textbooks.

General Textbook Findings

The frequency responses to the open-ended questions are suitable for testing the first two hypotheses because they show the general nature of student attitudes toward textbooks.

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table 1 about here

As seen from Table 1, students are outspoken about their textbooks. Again, the rationale for including open-ended introductory questions was to avoid sensitizing respondents to the aspects of textbooks the literature considers; to allow students to voice an opinion first. The authors were expecting few responses, but instead 89% of the students mentioned one helpful aspect about textbooks, and 34% mentioned more than one; 80% mentioned an aspect that did not help them learn, and 17% mentioned more than one (see "n" at top of column; second response not presented). Additionally, nearly half of the respondents actually mentioned a specific helpful class or textbook; nearly one-third mentioned a specific class or textbook that did not help them learn. Specifying classes or textbooks was not part of the question.

Based on these percentage responses to the open-ended questions, research statement 1 is accepted: Students' strong opinions about their texts confirms that they consider textbooks an important part of their college courses.

Research statement 2 is also supported: Students will be most concerned about a textbook's writing, then the cues that help interpret the writing, and lastly all other aspects of a textbook. Nearly half of the most helpful aspects are in the writing area, an additional 16% are in the organizational category (cues that help interpretation), and graphics as well as other responses (although accounting for 35%) are too diverse to codify as consequential. Of the least helpful aspects, nearly 60% are in the writing area, an additional 10% are in organization, and graphics with other responses (although 33%) are too diverse to codify.

Obviously, certain elements listed might be grouped differently. For example, is a "sidebar" an organizational device or a graphic? In the least helpful listing, it could be argued that "too much text without a break" belongs in graphics (a visual) or writing (complexity) rather than organization. Similar debate is possible about other category selections. However, a review of the lists should confirm that most of the decisions, especially those in the writing area that received such frequent student mention, are in their proper category.

Research statement 3, that students generally agree with one another about what constitutes a helpful textbook and one that interferes with learning, receives some support from the grouping of percentages shown in Table 1, however, this research statement relies on other questionnaire items shown in Table 2.

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table 2 about here

The first indication of agreement is seen in the consistency of rankings given the seven helpful statements about textbooks. Again, students rank the seven very similarly to the ranking derived from the open-ended questions: 1) interesting writing, 2) organization and 3) illustration. Because this rating scale allowed selection of only three statements, having additional writing elements appear lower on the scale may be an outcome of the limits. For example, students selected one writing, one organization and one illustration aspect rather than three writing aspects.

The rating scale allowed students to rate each of eight items from "0," meaning "it really interferes with learning" to "10," meaning it really helps learning." Here, because all items are rated, aspects that help learning include chapter-end summaries, glossaries, and introductions that overview what is to follow. None of these is specifically "writing," but they all are organizing principles that help make the text easier to read and understand. Study questions at the end of chapters are clearly "organizational" in nature, and color, wide page margins and sidebars may all be classified as graphics. The single interference on the list is the parenthetical author citations in sentences that make the text more difficult to read.

The ranking scale for items that distract, may suggest that students disagree with previous comments, because long blocks of text was the most distracting, followed by cost, dated material in the book, and long sentences and paragraphs, etc. However, having to select three among the seven may have prevented long sentences/paragraphs from being the most distracting. The long blocks of text without a break (previous placing first in the "least helpful — organization" with 7% (see Table 1) may be seen as more of a writing hindrance than a graphic distraction. Cost of the book might have placed high because this was the only item dealing with book costs.

Regardless of the possible weakness in the argument caused by the text distraction rankings, the standard deviations of the seven items in each ranking set indicate stability and high Kurtosis, suggesting that the scores hug the mean. The standard deviations in the eight items of the rating set are less stable but still suggest homogeneity of opinion. The weight of these several outcomes supports research statement 3, that students generally agree about which textbook aspects are helpful and which aspects interfere with learning.

The study turns now to comparisons between mass communication students and those in other disciplines, and among the four traditional sequences of mass communication.

Mass Communication Texts Findings

Before comparing the mass communication students' perceptions of textbooks to the general student sample, an analysis of demographics required special selection. The general student sample had 53% freshman and sophomore representation. The mass communication group was sampled from juniors and seniors, those who would have been exposed to several textbooks in the discipline; this sample had no freshmen and only 6% sophomores (classification Chi-square = 398.40; p <.0001). To make meaningful comparisons, only the juniors and seniors from the general student and mass communication groups were compared, as shown in Table 3.

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table 3 about here

Mass communication vs. general sample. Some differences are apparent between mass communication and the general student juniors and seniors. Perhaps the first worth noting is that the mass communication students were far more likely to be seniors and, accordingly, one year older than the general population, primarily juniors. The effect of age and classification is discussed in the conclusions section. Other findings are that a larger percentage of the mass communication students rate the quality of writing as most helpful aspects of a textbook. While they are more likely (not significant) to name a specific helpful book or course, they are nowhere near as likely to name a least helpful book or course. This effect may be due to mass communication students rating books in their major, although there is no evidence of such rationale.

Mass communication students were more likely to focus on poor writing being an interference than was the general group. And in the rankings, only one significant difference (highlighting with boldface or italics on words to be defined) was noted with mass communication students rating this feature as less helpful. Four categories of ratings showed significant differences with mass communications students rating chapter summaries higher; rating end-of-chapter study questions lower; rating color in headlines or pictures higher; and rating author cites in sentences significantly lower. The second set of rankings, those of distracting characteristics, are omitted from Table 3 because there were no significant differences between the two groups, and both groups rated those features exactly as the entire sample rated them.

Based on these findings, research statement 4 is rejected. While nothing in the literature suggests that students in different disciplines will have different perceptions of textbooks, eight significant differences were found among 26 comparisons assessing textbooks. The finding indicates that mass communication students do view their texts differently by placing more emphasis on the writing aspects, being less inclined to identify a specific least helpful book or class, by being more favorable toward color in a text, and by rating end-of-chapter study questions less important.

Mass communications sequences compared. Relying on the entire sample of mass communication respondents, their views about textbooks are compared as shown in Table 4.

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table 4 about here

Although not a significant difference, news-editorial majors are more likely to name a specific helpful book or course. Frequently mentioned was the *AP Stylebook*, which may be one of the few textbooks that are used in several courses. In the helpful category, advertising and public relations students were more likely to stress the writing in their texts as helpful to learning than were the broadcast and news-ed majors. Advertising and broadcast majors gave more mentions to the organization of a text, and advertising and broadcast majors were more interested in graphics.

None of the mass communication groups was likely to mention a specific least helpful course or textbook, but public relations majors were the least likely by far. Among most helpful aspects, advertising and broadcast majors gave higher rankings to illustrations as helpful aspects (although not significant); and both of these groups gave higher ratings to color, headlines and pictures being helpful in texts. These findings, though not overwhelming, allow support of research statement 5: advertising and broadcasting majors rate textbook graphics as more important than do news-editorial and public relations. Although this research statement had no grounding in any literature, it was assumed that advertising and broadcasting are more visually oriented mass communication sequences, and that this trait would be reflected and appreciated in textbooks. The finding adds face validity to the study.

Three other perceptions about textbooks were significant: 1) broadcast and public relations majors gave higher ratings to end-of-chapter summaries, 2) broadcast majors gave higher ratings while news-ed majors gave lower ratings to glossaries and 3) public relations majors gave higher ratings to wide page margins for notes. The distracting characteristics set of responses had no significant differences, matched the rankings of the entire sample and are not included in Table 4.

In regard to the last research statement, of 26 comparisons about textbooks, only six show significant differences, and two of the six were predicted in the previous research statement. With only four unexpected significant differences, research statement 6 is accepted, that all of the mass communication students will have similar impressions about their textbooks.

Conclusions

Five of the six research statements were supported, with only research statement 4 being rejected: mass communication students' impressions of their texts was not similar to that of the general sample of students. Mass communication students assess their textbooks differently, or do they? This discord is somewhat debatable considering the differences in the two samples. Regardless of controls, the mass communication group was more likely to be seniors, older and female. In addition, they were assessing books in their own sequence of advertising, broadcasting, news-ed and public relations. Teasing out some of these differences might be possible, although that goes beyond this study's scope. But it is impossible to determine the effects of asking the mass communication students about books in their major and comparing those answers with the general sample's assessment of "college textbooks."

Luckily this distinction is not pertinent to the wealth of findings the study provides about college students' perception of their texts, and mass communication students' perception of theirs. The study offers some satisfying outcomes and a prescription for teachers who have the liberty to choose their own textbooks.

Satisfying outcomes. The study confirms, with rather irrefutable evidence, that students care about their course textbook. They are candid in describing aspects of their texts that helped them learn and those that interfered with learning; they remember helpful and non-helpful textbooks; and they link the helpful textbooks with helpful classes and vice versa. These responses confirm that students consider textbooks an integral part of the course learning experience.

Further, students believe that the quality of writing in a textbook is paramount, and that writing aspects account for half of the helpful learning and nearly 60% of the non-helpful learning. Far below writing are the organizational elements of text, and graphic aspects come last. In regard to writing quality, the two most helpful aspects to students are: 1) relevant examples that review or reinforce lecture material, and 2) easy to read; clear writing. The three least helpful writing aspects, all receiving equal mentions, were: 1) long sentences/wordy, 2) writing is confusing; doesn't make sense, and 3) writing is boring/not interesting.

prescriptive list (table 5) about here

Directives and signals, or the organizational elements are next in importance. Students like: 1) key words in boldface or italic, 2) end-of-chapter summaries, 3) glossaries, 4) introductions to chapters that overview the content, and study questions; they don't like long blocks of text without a break. Although graphics is the third area of concern, students like charts, tables, diagrams and pictures; they don't like small print, and they aren't particularly impressed by sidebars

The cost of the book is a potentially negative factor as is one with dated material. Some of the aspects a teacher might like are not well received by students, such as too many charts and graphs or too many references.

The findings reviewed apply to the entire sample, including mass communication students. But mass communication students' views about textbooks are different from those of the general student population, and provide additional clues about selecting textbooks. Mass communication students are less likely to identify a specific book or course as being non-helpful. They are more emphatic about the quality of writing in a textbook than the general population.

Among mass communication sequences, advertising and public relations were most concerned with writing; advertising and broadcasting students are more concerned with organization and graphics; public relations students are least likely to name a specific least-helpful course or textbook; and broadcasting and public relations students rate end-of-chapter summaries higher. Other than graphics being more important to advertising and broadcasting students, the four sequences of mass communication majors have similar views about textbooks.

While this study concludes that college students' perceptions about textbooks are similar, the study also confirms that students view textbooks as an important element of their courses, and it identifies aspects of a text that students consider most important. The study provides a satisfying conclusion about text writing quality and a prescription for college teachers to use in future textbook adoption decisions.

Notes

1. Textbooks help shape the curriculum, and they are the main element that influences how knowledge is presented in the classroom. See Michael W. Apple (1986). *Teachers and texts*. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

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15. Ray Clines (1995). "Beliefs about textbooks: Implications for writing instruction." Paper presented to the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Washington, DC.

16. See David E. Schneider (1991). "An analysis of readability levels of contemporary textbooks that employ a hybrid approach to the basic communication course," *Communication Education 40*(2):165-171. See also: Laura Chavkin (1997). "Readability and reading ease revisited: State-adopted science textbooks," *The Clearing House 70*(3):151-154; Edward B. Fry (1989). "Reading formulas: Maligned but valid," *Journal of Reading 32*(4):292-297; Martha Maxwell (1980). *Improving student learning skills*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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31. The sequence of intercoder reliability testing, samples and the Kliphendorf alphas were: prior to coding, two samples of 10 questionnaires, 73.0 and 80.5; middle of coding, sample of 10, 82.5; after coding last set, sample of 38, 85.6. In all, intercoder reliability on the most difficult decision points increased through the coding task.

Table 1: Students' open-ended opinions about textbooks (n = 1,170)

Most helpful — aspect that helped learn	(n=1,037)
writing:	
relevant examples/problems	18%
easy to read; clear writing	12
relates to every life; hands-on	6
good organization of material	5
step-by-step explanations	4
thorough; covers subject	3
explains course topics in detail	3
clear definitions	3
writer's loyalty to field explicit	1
category total	49%
organization:	
key words in boldface, italic	4%
summaries at chapter end	4
study/review questions at end	2
glossary, index, table-contents	2
subheads; divisional breaks	1
answers to problems in back	1
key concepts top of chapter	1
chapter diagram in outline	1
sentence summary side of text	--
category total	16%
graphics:	
charts, tables, diagrams	7%
pictures	4
color	1
sidebars	--
category total	12%
other aspects:	
relates to major or interest	3%
textbook supports lecture	2
use other classes; after graduate	2
all other items mentioned	16
category total	23%

Least helpful — did not help learn	(n=937)
writing:	
long sentences; wordy	8%
writing is confusing	8
writing is boring; uninteresting	8
poor examples	6
generally difficult to read	6
too much on unimportant topics	5
too much technical jargon	5
content is outdated	4
poorly organized; skips around	3
poor writing; level too high/low	2
already knew the information	1
condescending; patronizing	1
badly written (by instructor)	1
category total	58%
organization:	
too much text without break	7%
have to search, re-read to find	1
lacks review questions	1
doesn't have an index	1
lists places/dates, not concepts	--
summaries are too long	--
category total	10%
graphics:	
print is too small	3%
too many diagrams, too complex	2
don't like sidebars, inserts	--
category total	5%
other aspects:	
teacher assigns, doesn't use	4%
text doesn't support lectures	4
doesn't relate to major, interest	2
price is too high to justify	2
tests not on the textbook	--
other items mentioned	16
category total	28%

Percent naming a specific textbook or class as an example:	
most helpful	47%
least helpful	32%

Table 2: Agreement in students' scale rankings and ratings (n=1,170)

Helpful textbook reasons (1=most helpful)	Mean	S.D.
Interesting...relates content to everyday life, how to use the information (n=647)	1.805	.80
Organization...clear what chapter covers, lots of headings and subheads, logical order (n=597)	1.918	.80
Illustrations...photos, charts, tables that relate to text and make reading it easier (n=475)	2.013	.85
Writing...written at a level that is easy to read, almost conversational (n=521)	2.008	.82
Knowledgeable...authors are authorities; book gives footnotes, references and glossaries (n=169)	2.095	.78
Highlighting...boldface or italics on the words to be defined (n=356)	2.119	.77
Thoroughness...covers the material; can tell what is important and likely to be on a test (n=392)	2.220	.80

Textbook aspect ratings; helps to interferes (n=1,146) (10=most helpful; 0=really interferes)	Mean	S.D.
Detailed chapter-end summary that reviews main points	8.304	2.31
Glossaries at end of book with key terms/definitions	8.036	2.35
Introduction to chapters overviews what is presented	6.584	2.82
Study questions given at the end of chapters	6.514	3.03
Color, such as color headlines or color pictures	6.032	2.91
Wide page margins to write notes, summaries, comments	5.630	2.86
Sidebars, or blocks of information such as chapter on abstract art with a box set aside on Picasso's life	5.172	2.94
Parenthesis in sentences references article authors and dates	3.070	2.65

-continued-

-Table 2 continued-

Distracting textbook reasons (1=most distracting)	Mean	S.D.
Long blocks of text...difficult to concentrate; need subdivision breaks	1.648	.77
Cost of the book...a $50 or more book is rarely worth the price (n=581)	1.948	.87
Dated material...book written too long ago; no recent references (n=382)	2.120	.79
Long sentences and paragraphs... these are needlessly confusing (n=723)	2.144	.74
Too many charts/graphs...get in the way (147)	2.146	.77
Too many references...citing one after the other gets tedious (n=404)	2.270	.76
References at back...too hard to find (n=113)	2.336	.78

Table 3: Mass communication vs. other disciplines view of textbooks (juniors and seniors only)

	Mass Comm (n=539)	Other Disciplines (n=243)	p
Named specific helpful course or textbook	49%	44%	
Helpful aspect category (open-end):			
writing	69%	59%	
organization	8	17	<.001
graphics	3	7	
Named specific least helpful course or text	25%	40%	<.001
Least helpful aspect category (open-end):			
writing	63%	53%	
organization	2	4	<.05
graphics	13	11	
Classification:			
junior	30%	63%	<.0001
senior	70	37	
Ranking of most helpful aspect (1=most)			
interesting; relates to everyday life	1.7	1.8	
organization	2.0	2.0	
writing	2.0	2.0	
illustrations	2.1	1.9	
knowledgeable	2.1	2.2	
highlighting	2.3	2.0	<.05
thoroughness	2.3	2.2	
Ratings: interferes "0"; helps "10":			
detailed summary at chapter end	8.5	8.0	<.05
glossaries at end with key terms	8.1	8.0	
overview chapter introductions	6.6	6.3	
study questions at end of chapters	5.9	6.8	<.001
color, headlines or pictures	6.3	5.6	<.01
wide page margins for notes	5.7	5.3	
sidebars — art and Picasso	5.3	5.2	
author cite parentheses in sentences	2.7	3.3	<.01
Age	22.4	21.5	<.0001

Table 4: Advertising, broadcasting, news-ed and public relations compared

	Adv. (n=123)	Brdcst. (n=179)	News (n=132)	PR (n=168)	p
Named specific helpful course or textbook	47%	44%	58%	48%	
Helpful aspect category (open-end):					
writing	71%	62%	65%	76%	
organization	11	14	5	5	<.001
graphics	11	5	1	--	
Named specific least helpful course or text	25%	28%	30%	16%	<.05
Least helpful category (open-end):					
writing	62%	64%	60%	63%	
organization	--	2	4	1	
graphics	19	11	6	16	
Most helpful aspect (1=most)					
interesting	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	
organization	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0	
writing	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	
illustrations	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.3	=.07
knowledgeable	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.0	
highlighting	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.2	
thoroughness	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.3	
Ratings: interferes "0"; helps "10":					
detailed chapter end summaries	8.2	8.9	8.0	8.6	<.001
glossaries at end with key terms	8.2	8.6	7.6	8.0	<.001
overview chapter introductions	6.3	6.8	6.3	6.8	
study questions end of chapters	6.4	6.3	5.5	5.8	
color, headlines or pictures	7.0	6.6	5.5	6.0	<.001
wide page margins for notes	5.4	5.6	5.4	6.4	<.05
sidebars — art and Picasso	5.2	5.2	5.7	5.3	
author cite parentheses in text	3.0	2.9	2.5	2.6	
Classification:					
junior	35%	29%	31%	22%	
senior	59%	57%	58%	74%	
Gender, female	67%	53%	59%	74%	<.001
Age	22.4	21.8	22.9	21.9	<.05

Table 5: Prescriptive list to judge textbooks — review before adopting

1) Students have strong opinions about their textbooks; the text is an integral part of the course learning experience

- ***review texts carefully before adopting... selecting the textbook might be a teacher's most important decision about the course***

2) *Writing* is what distinguishes a helpful textbook from a least helpful text;
   students want:
      a) relevant examples that review or reinforce lecture material
      b) clear writing that is easy to read
   students don't want:
      a) boring writing
      b) long, wordy sentences
      c) writing that is confusing

- ***writing must be interesting, clear, easy and contain relevant examples; reject boring, confusing, long-winded writing***

3) *Organization* (aspects such as boldface words and chapter summaries) runs a poor second; and *graphics* are least important

4) Helpful organizational aspects are:
      a) keywords in boldface or italics
      b) detailed end-of-chapter summaries
      c) glossaries at the end of the book
      d) chapter introductions that overview content to come
      e) study questions at the end of chapters

- ***a quick scan shows if a text has these organizational elements***

5) Cost of a textbook is important; students weigh cost against value received

6) Mass communication students are even more emphatic about the quality of writing in their texts than is the general student population:
      a) they like end-of-chapter summaries
      b) they are less interested in end-of-chapter study questions

- ***writing quality foremost in mass communication texts***

7) Among mass communication sequences, advertising and broadcasting majors pay more attention to organization and graphics than do news-ed and public relations majors

- ***advertising and broadcasting majors depend more on graphics than do news-ed and public relations majors***

APPENDIX 1

Textbook Appraisal Questionnaire

1. Of the college textbooks you have used, think of those most **helpful** to you. Name **one** aspect about them that helped you learn:

2. Of the college textbooks you have used, think of those **least** helpful to you. Name **one** aspect about them that **did not** help you learn:

3. Let's return to the most **helpful** college textbooks. Here are some things other students say have been helpful. Mark only the statements you think are your first, second and third reasons a college textbook is helpful (*use 1, 2 and 3 only — leave the rest blank*):

____ a. illustrations...photos, charts, tables that are related to the text and make reading it easier
____ b. organization...clear what chapter covers, lots of headings and subheads, logical order
____ c. interesting...relates content to everyday life, how to use the information
____ d. knowledgeable...authors are authorities; book gives footnotes, references and glossaries
____ e. highlighting...boldface or italics on the words to be defined
____ f. writing...written at a level that is easy to read, almost conversational
____ g. thoroughness...covers the material; can tell what is important and likely to be on a test

4. Rate these aspects about textbooks from "0" to "10" giving a "0" if you think it really interferes with learning; a "10" if you think it really helps learning:

____ a. color, such as color headlines or color pictures
____ b. an introduction to chapters that overviews what will be presented
____ c. sidebars, or blocks of information such as a chapter on abstract art with a box set aside on Picasso's life
____ d. detailed summary at the end of chapters that reviews main points
____ e. parenthesis in sentences that reference article authors and dates
____ f. glossaries at the end of the book giving key terms and definitions
____ g. wide page margins that allow writing notes, summaries, comments
____ h. study questions given at the end of the chapters

-OVER-

5. Let's return to the **least** helpful college textbooks. Here are some things other students say have been distracting. Mark only the statements that are your first, second and third reasons a college textbook is distracting (*use 1, 2 and 3 only — leave the rest blank*):

____ a. long blocks of text...difficult to concentrate; need subdivision breaks
____ b. references at back of the book...too hard to find
____ c. dated material...book written too long ago; no recent references
____ d. too many charts and graphs...they get in the way
____ e. too many references...citing one after the other gets tedious
____ f. cost of the book...a $50 or more book is rarely worth the price
____ g. long sentences and paragraphs...these are needlessly confusing

6. Is there something about college textbooks that you especially **like** or **dislike** that hasn't been mentioned in this questionnaire:

7. What is your major: ______________________________

8. What is your classification:
a. freshman
b. sophomore
c. junior
d. senior
e. graduate student

9. Are you (*circle one*): male female

10. How old are you: ________

Thanks for helping with this class assignment by participating in this survey.

APPENDIX 2 Participants

University	Professor	MC Area	#
Miami, University of	Don W. Stacks Michael Salwen Bruce Garrison	General	260
Arkansas State University	Gregory Pitts	Brdcst	38
Arizona State University	Marianne Barrett	Brdcst	18
Arizona State University	John Craft	Brdcst	16
Brigham Young University	Laurie J. Wilson	PR	30
Bowling Green State University	Terri Rentner	PR	43
Bradley University	John Schweitzer	Adv	30
Bradley University	John Schweitzer	News	30
California State - Chico	Glen Bleske	News	15
California State - Fullerton	Robert Picard	Adv	30
California State - Fullerton	Robert Picard	Brdcst	30
Colorado State University	Garrett Ray	News	16
Drake University	Henry Milam	PR	34
Emerson College	Marsha Della-Giustina	Brdcst	30
Evansville, University of	Larry Burkum	Brdcst	13
George Mason University	Cindy Lont	Brdcst	25
Illinois, University of	Cele Otnes	Adv	30
Iowa, University of	Stephen G. Bloom	News	16
Ithaca College	Carolyn Byerly	News	30
Iowa State University	Joel Geske	Adv	18
John Carroll University	Craig Smith	Brdcst	34
Kent State University	Fran Collins	Adv	20
Kentucky, University of	Richard Labunsky	Brdcst	27
Norfolk State University	Shirley Carter	Adv	15
Marist College	Margot Hardenbergh	News	8
Marquette University	Michael J. Havice	Brdcst	24
Memphis, University of	Rick Fischer	PR	20
Montana, University of	Bill Knowles	Brdcst	30

- continued -

- Appendix 2 continued -

Nevada-Reno, University of	Judith B. Mathews	Brdcst	18
North Carolina, University of	Richard F. Lauterborn	Adv	21
Northern Illinois University	Albert Walker	PR	11
Northern Iowa, University of	Dean Kruckeberg	PR	22
Ohio Wesleyan University	Paul Kostyu	News	35
Ohio State University	Dave Richter	Brdcst	18
Oklahoma State University	Steven Smethers	Brdcst	42
Oregon, University of	Jim Upshaw	Brdcst	9
Rutgers University	Steve Miller	Brdcst	30
Scranton, University of	Jan Kelly	PR	9
Shippensburg University	C. Lynne Nash	News	15
Southern California, University of	Bob Long	Brdcst	5
Southern California, University of	Amy Huggins,	Brdcst	16
Southern California, University of	Terry Anzur	Brdcst	16
South Dakota State	Dick Lee	News	21
South Dakota, University of	Richard Lee	News	21
Southwest Texas State	Sarah Plaster	Adv	15
Southwest Texas State	Ekaterina Ognianova Walsh	Adv	38
Tennessee-Chattanooga, University	Kittrell Rushing	Brdcst	18
Texas-Arlington, University of	Robert Pennington	Adv	20
Texas A & M University	John McCarroll	Brdcst	16
Washington State University	Elizabeth Krueger	Brdcst	25
Western Kentucky University	JoAnn Huff Albers	News	30
Wisconsin, University of	Deborah Blum	News	24
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	1
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	22
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	17
Unidentified	---	Adv	11
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	7
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	6
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	13
Unidentified	---	Brdcst	20
Unidentified	---	PR	10
Unidentified	---	Adv	18

ASSESSING WRITING BY ANALYZING WRITING: ABILITY GROUPING AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Kristie Bunton, Stacey Frank Kanihan and Mark Neuzil

Paper submitted to the Excellence in Teaching Competition
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in Journalism and Mass Communication, Baltimore, Maryland

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ASSESSING WRITING BY ANALYZING WRITING: ABILITY GROUPING AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

75-WORD ABSTRACT

Ability grouping and media writing are analyzed with student news stories and mechanical skills tests. Students (N=73) were placed into remedial and regular groups. Writing content (lead, organization, accuracy) and mechanics (grammar, AP style) were measured several times during the semester. The remedial group's writing improved and was not significantly different from the regular group by the final exam. Story and test scores correlated significantly, suggesting tests are a positive indicator of writing ability.

ASSESSING WRITING BY ANALYZING WRITING: ABILITY GROUPING AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

250-WORD ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between ability grouping of mass media writing students and improved competence in writing content skills, such as selection and organization of facts, accurate use of information and identification of the lead. The study also explored the relationship between increased competence in mechanical skills, such as grammar and Associated Press style, and improvement in writing content skills.

Students (N=73) were placed into two ability groups, remedial and regular, depending on their score on an objective mechanical skills test. To examine writing content skills, researchers content analyzed news stories written by students at the beginning of the course, at midterm and at the end of the course. To examine mechanical skills, researchers measured performance on a grammar and style test given at three points during the semester.

Remedial group students improved their writing content skills to the point where their skill level was indistinguishable from regular group students by the end of the course, indicating that ability grouping leads to improved competence in writing content skills. Remedial group students also improved their mechanical skills by the end of the course.

The results suggest a positive relationship between improvement in writing content skills and increased competence in mechanical skills, thus providing a multi-method approach to support ability groups as a strategy for improving student learning in mass media writing courses. These results also establish the construct validity of using objective exams to measure mechanical skills and as indicators of ability to write a news story.

ASSESSING WRITING BY ANALYZING WRITING: ABILITY GROUPING AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Success in mastering news writing skills can be evaluated by students' handling of both content issues (identification of the lead, selection and organization of information, and accuracy in reporting facts) and mechanical issues (proper use of English grammar and Associated Press style). This study examines the use of ability grouping in a mass media writing course to improve writing students' deficits in both content and mechanical skills.

Improvement in writing can be assessed by scores on tests of mechanical skills or by evaluating a piece of writing itself. In this study, students' news stories are content analyzed over a semester to measure changes in quality that may be influenced by ability grouping. In addition, students' scores on grammar and style tests are tracked throughout the semester to further assess the effects of ability grouping on writing improvement.

Background

Journalism professors and professionals often have bemoaned journalism students' lack of mastery in both content and mechanical skills. For example, studies by Williams (1983), Stone (1990) and Auman (1995) reported professors' and professionals' perceptions that journalism students' basic content and mechanical skills were deficient.

To remedy these deficiencies, some journalism programs have required students to pass grammar and language proficiency tests before enrolling in journalism writing courses. John, Ruminski and Hanks (1991) reported that 36.4 percent of the 236 journalism programs they surveyed required tests of English writing skills. Adams (1978) reported that faculty in large journalism programs, which enrolled 500 or more majors, generally believed that proficiency tests were better used to pinpoint students' weaknesses than to exclude students from courses. Some journalism programs have created writing labs or remedial tutoring programs in which students work to improve deficiencies in mechanical skills (Ryan and Pruitt, 1978; Hynes, 1978; Thayer, 1978; DiNicola, 1994), while other programs have standardized the content of all basic writing courses as a way to ensure students master a common set of skills (Blanchard, 1984). The success of these techniques in improving student writing has been mixed (Hynes, 1978; Thayer, 1978; Blanchard, 1984).

In English writing courses at the elementary, secondary and college levels, teachers long have experimented with proficiency testing and remedial measures, including the use of ability groups, to improve students' skills. Ability groups place students in groups with students of similar ability.

Studies that support ability grouping suggest students may perform better and teachers may be more effective in addressing students who share similar abilities (Oakes and Lipton, 1994). Some evidence, in fact, supports the use of ability grouping to challenge higher-level students and to improve the performance of students at all skill levels in high school (Newfield and McElyea, 1983). On the other hand, ability grouping has been criticized for potentially "ghettoizing" students by race, ethnicity or socioeconomic class, which then impairs their self-esteem. According to Slavin and Braddock (1994, p. 291), "Proponents of ability grouping have claimed that grouping is necessary to individualize instruction for students and to accommodate their diverse needs. ... In contrast, opponents of ability grouping have been concerned about the negative effects of the practice on low achievers, in particular denying them access to high-quality instruction."

Little research has been directed to the practice of ability grouping in higher education, and particularly in journalism education. Haber's (1988) experiment with within-class ability groups of students in a media writing course found no statistically significant differences in the students' performance on a writing skills test given at the conclusion of the course. However, Kanihan, Bunton and Neuzil (1998) successfully used ability groups in a mass media writing course to remedy deficiencies in students' mechanical skills. They found that placing students into remedial and regular ability groups by scores on a placement test, and then drilling students on mechanical skills, such as English grammar and Associated Press style, produced an improved level of competence among remedial students by the end of the semester.

The purpose of this study is to examine whether ability groups produce improvements in students' writing content skills and to use ability grouping as a strategy for improving students' mechanical skills. Borrowing from Suhor (1985) and White (1989), this research looks at whether scores on the objective exams used to measure mechanical competence would correlate positively with scores on writing samples. Such a correlation would bolster evidence that using ability groups is an effective way to teach journalistic writing.

Content skills in writing can be measured in various ways. In English writing programs, for example, faculty have assessed writing samples with both "holistic" and "primary trait" scoring (Odell, 1993). Holistic scoring insists that writing samples be judged only on their overall meaning and presentation, while primary trait scoring assumes that particular kinds of writing are intended to meet specific goals and should be evaluated for their ability to satisfy those goals (Odell, 1993, p. 297). In primary trait evaluation, "readers judge written text in terms of characteristics necessary to accomplish a specific rhetorical task" (Brossell, 1986, p. 180).

The study on which this paper is based used a set of scoring criteria for evaluating news stories that borrows from the primary trait philosophy; the study identified the traits that journalism faculty insist a well-written news story should contain. For example, The Missouri Group's *News Reporting and Writing* (1996) is a widely used reporting text that emphasizes such skills as identification of the lead, selection and organization of information, attribution of facts and quotations, and accuracy in reporting information. Dodd, Mays and Tipton (1997) also insist on accuracy as a primary trait in news writing; they used a survey to measure students' writing for improvement in accuracy. Ryan (1995) presents a formula for news writing that emphasizes, as does The Missouri Group, identification of key information for the lead, correct attribution of information and use of quotations and facts to elaborate on themes raised in the lead. All of these concepts were used to develop the list of primary traits for evaluating students' news writing in this study.

This research also employs White's (1985) concept of the "anchor" or sample paper, in which faculty use student writing samples to agree on the traits they believe a well-written paper should contain. Anchor papers can be effective means of making concrete the criteria for content analysis of writing, White notes. "The goal is not only to obtain agreement on the scores of sample papers and on the usefulness of the scoring guide but to help the readers internalize the scoring scale by combining description with example" (p. 25).

Research Questions

This study asks two research questions: First, what is the relationship between ability grouping of undergraduate mass media writing students and improved competence in writing content skills, such as selection and organization of facts, accurate use of information and identification of the lead?

Second, what is the relationship between increased competence in mechanical skills, such as grammar and Associated Press style, and improvement in writing content skills?

Method

This study was conducted during the Fall 1997 and Spring 1998 semesters in Media Writing and Information Gathering, an introductory course required for journalism majors at a mid-sized, urban university in the Midwest. To examine students' writing content skills, the researchers content analyzed news stories written by each student at the beginning of the course, at midterm and at the end of the course. To examine students' mechanical skills, the researchers measured performance on a grammar and style test given at three points in the course. Subjects were students in the course; most subjects (N=73) were sophomores and juniors (90 percent) who were majoring in journalism (63 percent).

Independent Variable

Ability group. Media Writing and Information Gathering students were placed in ability group sections by scores on the Language Skills Test, an exam given before course registration. The 75-point Language Skills Test covered grammar, including agreement, redundancy, sentence structure, active verb use and parallel structure. Students who scored 64 points or more were placed in regular sections. Students who scored 60 to 63 points were placed in remedial sections.

Students who scored 59 points or lower were not permitted to enroll in the course, but could retake the Language Skills Test once; if they scored 60 or above the second time they were placed in a remedial section. A t-test indicated significant differences ($p<.001$) between the remedial and regular groups.

Procedure

In the Fall 1997 and Spring 1998 semesters, two remedial sections (N=25) and four regular sections (N=48) of Media Writing were taught by five faculty members. All subjects gave permission for a journalism department study of writing courses but did not know the study's purpose. All faculty knew that classroom data would be used for research purposes. Although this knowledge might have created demand characteristics, any effects would have been similar across all sections.

Dependent Variables

Mastery of content skills in media writing. Writing content skills were measured three times during the semester in both the regular and remedial sections. Students completed a baseline writing assessment on the first or second day of the class. Faculty distributed a fact pattern about a fatal traffic accident and asked students to write a newspaper story of up to 200 words in 30 minutes. At midterm, students were given the same fact pattern and again asked to write a 200-word newspaper story in a 30-minute period. At the time of the final exam, students were given an expanded fact pattern, which included direct quotations and additional facts, and asked to write up to 250 words in 30 minutes. (The fact patterns are included in Appendix A.)

Faculty members did not assist students in writing any of these three news stories.

The stories were independently content analyzed by three researchers, who identified "anchor" stories that exemplified writing competence and then developed a set of criteria based on the anchor stories and the standard concepts that journalism faculty emphasize in grading news stories in the course. The criteria (included in Appendix B) emphasized skills in writing content, such as selection and organization of facts, identification of the lead, and accurate use of information. The criteria also included mechanical issues, such as misspellings, sentence fragments and punctuation errors.

Each story, which totaled 75 points, was evaluated using these criteria.[1]

Competence level in mechanical skills in media writing. Students in both the remedial and regular sections of Media Writing were drilled throughout the 15-week semester on grammar issues, such as parallel structure, subject-verb agreement, dangling modifiers and active verbs, and Associated Press style, including capitalization, abbreviations, numerals, punctuation and spelling. Midterm and final exams, totaling 75 points each, measured competence level in these mechanical issues using multiple-choice items. Each exam also asked students to copyedit a news story for Associated Press style errors.

Results

Mastery of content skills in media writing

First, this research examined the relationship between ability grouping and improvement in students' writing content skills, such as selection and organization of facts, accurate use of information and identification of the lead. These data do not find a positive relationship between ability grouping and improvement in those skills. Although students in the remedial ability group improved their writing content skills throughout the semester, their skill level remained significantly different from students in the regular ability group at all three points in the course. The gap in the two groups' skills, however, narrowed in the expected direction. (See Figure 1.)

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[1] A check of intercoder reliability showed consistency among the three coders (r=.87).

At the beginning of the course, when all students wrote a news story of up to 200 words to serve as a baseline measure, the mean story score of the remedial group was 39.12 and the mean story score for the regular group was 48.62, for a difference between means of 9.5 ($p=.001$). The standard deviation of the remedial and regular groups at the time of the baseline story was relatively high (11.45 for the remedial group and 8.00 for the regular group). This indicates a fairly wide range of scores among both groups.

By the midterm point in the course, when the students again wrote a news story of up to 200 words, the gap between the remedial and regular groups' scores had begun to narrow. The mean story score of the remedial group was 52.96, as compared to 59.50 for the regular group, for a difference between means of 6.54 ($p<.001$). This indicates the gap between students' scores had begun to shrink, but a significant difference in their skills still existed. The standard deviation of both groups also had decreased (5.47 for the remedial group and 6.80 for the regular group). This indicates that both groups of students performed more consistently at the midterm than at the beginning of the course.

At the end of the course, when students were given additional facts and quotations and asked to write a news story of up to 250 words, the mean story score between the remedial and regular ability groups remained significantly different, although the gap in the two groups' scores had narrowed slightly. The remedial group's mean story score was 48.84, and the regular group's mean story score was 54.79, for a mean difference of 5.95 (p=.002). The drop in mean story score from the midterm to the end of the course for both groups may be explained by the increased difficulty of the final story assignment. Although these results find a narrowing of the gap in the two groups' skills, the existence of a statistically significant difference in skills raises questions about whether ability grouping leads to improved competence in writing content skills. (See Table 1.)

For further analysis, the students' writing was broken down into two skill sets: The first set of skills emphasized organization, including news judgment, identification of the lead, selection of information and accurate use of facts; the second set of skills emphasized overall writing skills, such as tone, attribution, grammar, spelling and Associated Press style. (See Appendix B.)

At the beginning of the course, the difference in the remedial and regular students' organizational skills approached significance (p=.06). The mean number of organizational errors for the remedial group was 8.04, while the mean number of organizational errors for the regular group was 5.87. The difference in the two groups' organizational skills at midterm also approached significance (p=.06), but the gap in mean number of errors was beginning to narrow. The remedial group's mean number of errors was 4.96, while the regular group's mean number of errors was 3.69. The standard deviations of both groups also decreased from the baseline to the midterm. (See Table 2.)

By the end of the course, when more organizational errors were possible on the longer final story than on the baseline or midterm stories, a significant difference remained in the remedial and regular groups' organizational skills. The remedial group's mean number of errors was 6.40, and the regular group's mean number of errors was 3.60 (p=.006). The standard deviations of both groups, especially the remedial group, increased by the final, indicating a widening range of skill in writing.

The lack of significant difference in the remedial and regular groups' organizational skills at the beginning of the course stands to reason: None of the students could be expected to bring news judgment skills to an entry-level media writing course. The lack of significant difference at the midterm point indicates that early on, the remedial students learned organizational skills at about the same rate as the regular students. By the end of the course, however, when the writing assignment demanded a more sophisticated command of organizational skills, the remedial students' skills were not strong enough to keep up with the regular students' skills.

At the beginning of the course, the remedial group's overall writing skills were significantly different from the regular group's. The mean number of writing errors for the remedial group was 27.92, while the mean number of errors for the regular group was 20.51 (p=.001). By midterm, the gap in the number of errors was narrowing. The mean number of writing errors for the remedial group was 17.08 and 11.79 for the regular group (p<.001). The standard deviations of both groups narrowed from the baseline to the midterm. (See Table 2.)

By the end of the course, a significant difference in the remedial and regular groups' overall writing skills remained. The remedial group's mean number of writing errors was 19.76, while the regular group's mean number of errors was 16.58 (p=.0046). The standard deviations of both groups increased from the midterm to the final, indicating a wider dispersion in the students' writing skills within each section. Although the mean number of writing errors for both groups increased from the midterm to the final, the final assignment asked students to write a story 25 percent longer than before and included quotations and new facts, which gave students more opportunity for error. The significant difference in the two groups' mean number of writing errors on the final story indicates that students in the remedial groups were not able to catch up with the regular students.

Competence level in mechanical skills in media writing

This study also probed the relationship between ability groups and increased competence in mechanical skills, such as grammar and Associated Press style. Here, the data reveal a positive relationship. (See Figure 2.) On the 75-point Language Skills Test used for placing students into remedial and regular sections, the remedial group's mean score was 58.92, while the regular group's mean score was 68.31 (p<.001). On the 75-point midterm mechanical skills exam, the remedial group's mean score was 54.92, and the regular group's mean score was 63.85 (p<.001).[2] On the final 75-point mechanical skills exam, the remedial group's mean score was 67.74, while the regular group's mean score was 67.70 (p=.951). (See Table 3.) The elimination of a statistically significant difference in the two groups' scores on the final test indicates that the remedial students mastered mechanical skills to the point that their skills were not distinguishable from the regular students' mechanical skills. These results provide support for the use of ability groups in media writing courses.

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[2] The mean test scores for both groups dropped from the Language Skills Test to the midterm because the midterm was a more difficult exam.

Relationships between mastery of content writing skills and competence in mechanical skills

The second research question of this study examined the relationship between improvement in writing content skills and increased competence in mechanical skills. These data reveal a slightly positive relationship between the skills. During the course of the semester, the gap between remedial and regular students' skills in writing content did not significantly narrow, but the statistically significant gap in students' mechanical skills was eliminated.

These data, then, support the construct validity of using objective exams to measure writing ability. That is, the Language Skills Test was a good indicator for student placement into ability groups and of student performance. Correlations were computed for story scores and mechanical skills test scores at corresponding time points throughout the semester; a positive relationship between scores on the mechanical skills tests and the ability to write a news story existed at two of the three points in the semester.

At the beginning of the course, the relationship between scores on the mechanical skills test and the news story was significant ($r=.38$; $p=.001$). At midterm, the correlation between the two scores also was significant ($r=.58$; $p<.001$). At the final, however, the scores did not correlate significantly ($r=.19$; $p=.115$), suggesting that students' mechanical skills, as measured by their scores on an objective test, do not correspond with the level of sophistication in organizational and content skills needed to write a news story. (See Table 4.)

Discussion

The pattern of results presented in this study indicates the usefulness of objective mechanical skills tests in placing students into ability group sections, or perhaps even into the journalism major overall. After placement into remedial groups by test scores on the objective mechanical skills test, remedial students improve their writing content skills and mechanical skills to the point where the gap in skills begins to narrow. These results bolster the case for the use of ability groups in journalism education made by Kanihan, Bunton and Neuzil (1998).

While the data in this study do not present a statistically significant positive relationship between ability grouping and improved competence in writing content skills, they do present a positive relationship between ability grouping and improved performance on tests of mechanical skills necessary for journalistic writing. The data also reflect improvement in writing skills in the expected direction. Where improvement did occur, it may have been because students in ability groups tend to share similar skills or deficiencies, and instructors can therefore efficiently address those issues in the ability group, as suggested by Slavin and Braddock (1994). In mixed sections, instructors may have to spend more time addressing a variety of student skills, while in ability groups, instructors may have the flexibility to adjust the pace of instruction to students' needs, as indicated by Oakes and Lipton (1994). That is, in a regular group, the instructor does not have to spend instructional time on severe mechanical deficits, while in a remedial group, the instructor may be able to spend more time coaching deficient students on such issues as grammar and style.

The data in this study also suggest a slightly positive relationship between increased competence in mechanical skills and improvement in writing content skills, thus introducing for consideration a multi-method approach to measure the effectiveness of ability groups as a strategy for improving student learning in mass media writing courses. As Suhor (1985) and

White (1989) suggest, correlating scores on objective skills tests and writing samples provides a more sound means of evaluating student writing than using one approach or the other. Given that this study found positive correlations between objective test scores and writing sample scores at two of three measurement points, the data indicate the need for more study of how such correlations between objective tests and writing samples might be consistently achieved. The content presented on objective tests might be altered to more accurately reflect desired writing skills, for instance.

The results also demonstrate some correlation between writing content skills and mechanical skills, suggesting that objective tests might be valid as measurements of mechanical skills and as positive indicators of students' ability to write a news story. Thus, the results of this study establish the benefit for journalism programs of using objective mechanical skills tests for entrance or placement purposes, which would address the concerns of journalism faculty reported by Adams (1978). Examining both writing samples and mechanical skills test scores is the best-case scenario for entrance or placement purposes, but these results indicate that journalism programs constrained by time or funding may be able to use mechanical skills tests scores alone as a valid indicator of student abilities. Mechanical skills test scores apparently point out "red flags" in students' ability to succeed in the journalism major, or at least in an entry-level writing course.

Future Research

This study addressed one of the directions for future research pointed out by Kanihan, Bunton and Neuzil (1998), who suggested coupling a content analysis of student writing with scores on objective mechanical skills tests to investigate the relationship between these techniques and the use of ability groups. Future research on the use of pedagogical techniques to improve student writing could evaluate other types of writing -- advertising copywriting or broadcast scripts, for example -- to see if placing students into ability groups in those areas leads to improved writing skills. Student writing also could be tracked over time. After students leave an entry-level ability-grouped course, how does their writing fare? Can remedial students placed into mixed sections of upper-level writing courses keep up with regular students?

Future research also could examine whether remedial students who are "mainstreamed," or placed into mixed-ability classes, show the same kind of improvement as remedial students placed into separate sections.

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Table 1

A Comparison of Writing Content Skills Competence in Remedial and Regular Ability Groups

	N	Mean[1]	S.D.	*t*	Prob.[2]
Baseline Story					
Remedial Sections	25	39.12	11.48	-3.70	0.001
Regular Sections	47	48.62	8.00		
Midterm Story					
Remedial Sections	25	52.96	5.47	-4.45	0.000
Regular Sections	48	59.50	6.80		
Final Story					
Remedial Sections	25	48.84	7.08	-3.32	0.002
Regular Sections	47	54.79	7.49		

[1] Each story totaled 75 points.
[2] Two-tailed significance level.

Table 2

A Comparison of Organizational Skills and Overall Writing Skills in Remedial and Regular Ability Groups

	N	Mean[1]	S.D.	*t*	Prob.[2]
Baseline Story					
Organizational Errors					
Remedial Sections	25	8.04	4.81	1.97	0.056
Regular Sections	47	5.87	3.65		
Baseline Story					
Overall Writing Errors					
Remedial Sections	25	27.92	8.65	3.71	0.001
Regular Sections	47	20.51	6.85		
Midterm Story					
Organizational Errors					
Remedial Sections	25	4.96	2.64	1.97	0.055
Regular Sections	48	3.69	2.58		
Midterm Story					
Overall Writing Errors					
Remedial Sections	25	17.08	4.54	4.38	0.000
Regular Sections	48	11.79	5.51		
Final Story					
Organizational Errors					
Remedial Sections	25	6.40	4.33	2.95	0.006
Regular Sections	47	3.60	2.71		
Final Story					
Overall Writing Errors					
Remedial Sections	25	19.76	6.12	2.05	0.046
Regular Sections	47	16.58	6.61		

[1] The mean represents the number of errors deducted from the 75-point story.
[2] Two-tailed significance level.

Table 3

A Comparison of Mechanical Skills Competence in Remedial and Regular Ability Groups

	N	Mean[1]	S.D.	*t*	Prob.[2]
Language Skills Test (Placement Exam)					
Remedial Sections	25	58.92	4.25	-10.19	0.000
Regular Sections	48	68.31	2.47		
Midterm Exam					
Remedial Sections	25	54.92	5.99	-6.04	0.000
Regular Sections	48	63.85	6.02		
Final Exam					
Remedial Sections	25	67.64	4.13	-0.06	0.951
Regular Sections	47	67.70	4.05		

[1] Each story totaled 75 points.
[2] Two-tailed significance level.

Table 4

Correlation Coefficients for News Story Scores and Mechanical Skills Test Scores

	Language Skills Test	Midterm Exam	Final Exam
Baseline Story	**.3749**** (N=72)		
Midterm Story	.5445*** (N=73)	**.5765***** (N=73)	
Final Story	.3835** (N=72)	.5815*** (N=72)	**.1876** (N=72)

Two-tailed significance level:
* = p<.05
** = p<.01
*** = p<.001

Figure 1
Writing Content Skills Competence by Ability Group

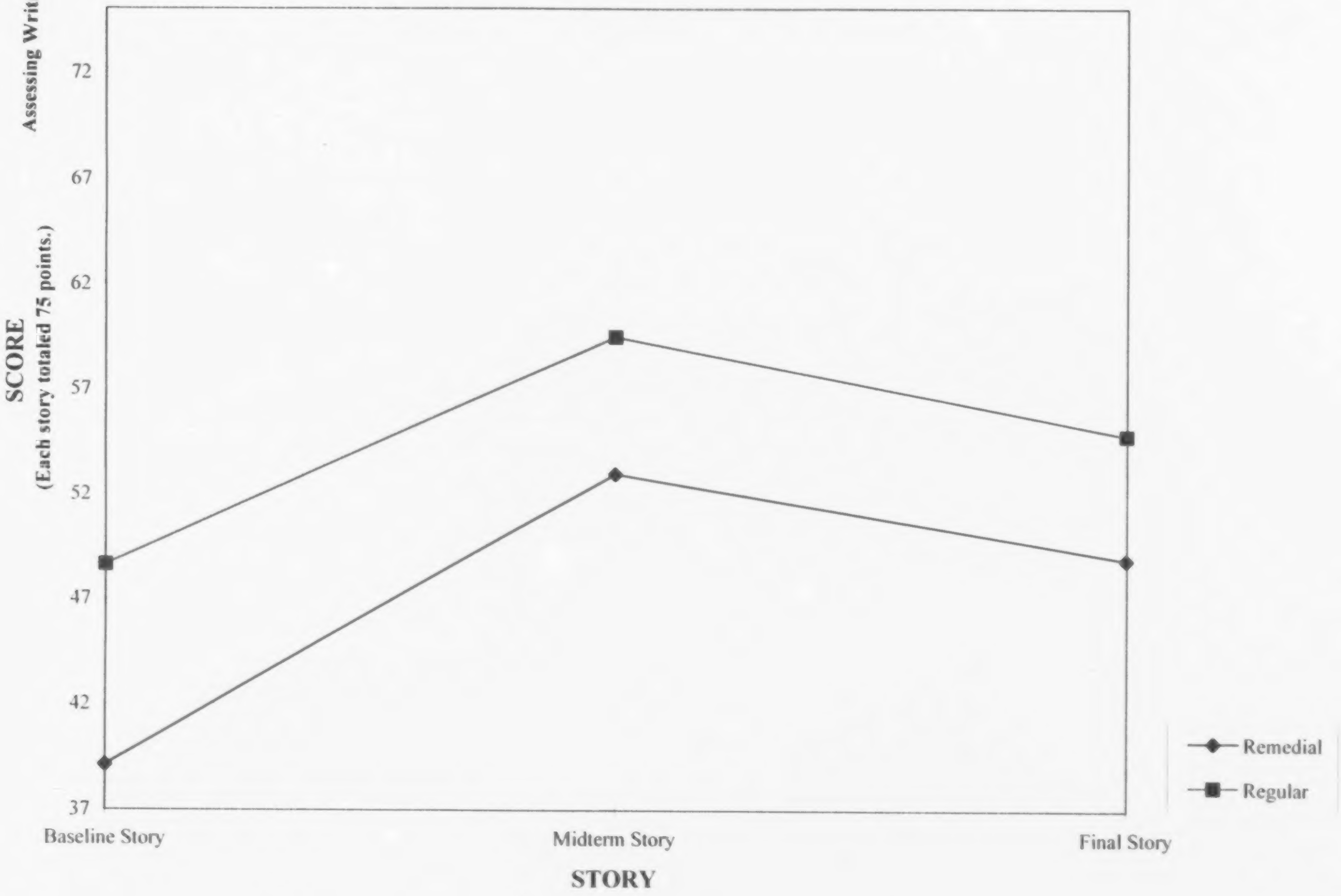
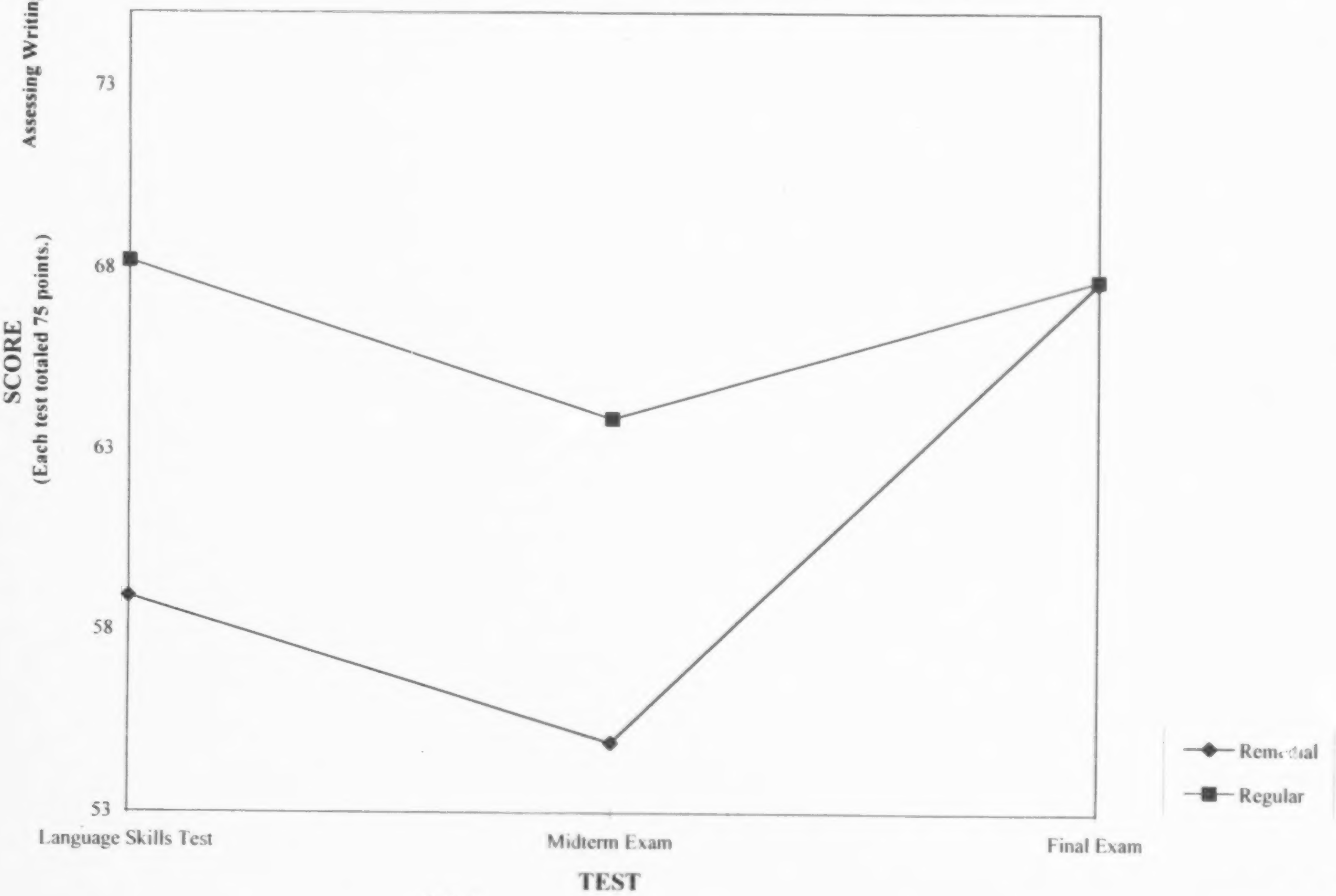


Figure 2
Mechanical-Skills Competence by Ability Group



APPENDIX A:

News Story Fact Patterns

JOUR 112
Fall 1997

From the information presented below, write a news story. This assignment will NOT be graded but will be used to assess writing skills upon course entry.

1. Write the story as though it will appear in tomorrow's *StarTribune*. All the events described below occurred today.
2. Write a maximum of 200 words.
3. Write for no longer than 30 minutes.

This information has been obtained from Rosemount police:

Donna L. Neal, 18, of 34 E. 139th Terrace, Rosemount; Angela Kelly, 18, of 263 Blue Ridge Blvd., Rosemount; and Colleen M. Stark, 17, of 534 Lexington Square, Rosemount; were on their way home from shopping at Mall of America at 1:30 p.m. Neal was driving her car, a 1996 Toyota Corolla, with Kelly and Stark as passengers.

Neal's eastbound car went out of control on I-494 in Mendota Heights, just before the Robert Street exit, crossing into the westbound lane and hitting the driver's side of a tractor-trailer truck. The truck driver, Robert White, 56, of Kansas City, Mo., was hauling a load of office furniture for O'Sullivan Industries of Lamar, Mo. He was not hurt.

Stark was taken to St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center in serious condition. Neal and Kelly died at the scene. Neal, Kelly and Stark were seniors at St. Regis High School in Rosemount. Arrangements for Neal's and Kelly's funerals are not yet available.

JOUR 112
October 1997
MIDTERM WRITING ASSESSMENT

From the information below, write a news story. The story will be used to assess change in writing skill from course entry to midterm. Any point value for this assignment will be determined by your instructor.

1. Write the story as though it will appear in tomorrow's *StarTribune*. All the events described below occurred today.
2. Write a maximum of 200 words.
3. Write for no longer than 30 minutes.

This information has been obtained from Rosemount police:

Donna L. Neal, 18, of 34 E. 139th Terrace, Rosemount; Angela Kelly, 18, of 263 Blue Ridge Blvd., Rosemount; and Colleen M. Stark, 17, of 534 Lexington Square Rosemount; were on their way home from shopping at Mall of America at 1:30 p.m. Neal was driving her car, a 1996 Toyota Corolla, with Kelly and Stark as passengers.

Neal's eastbound car went out of control on I-494 in Mendota Heights, just before the Robert Street exit, crossing into the westbound lane and hitting the driver's side of a tractor-trailer truck. The truck driver, Robert White, 56, of Kansas City, Mo., was hauling a load of office furniture for O'Sullivan Industries of Lamar, Mo. He was not hurt.

Stark was taken to St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center in serious condition. Neal and Kelly died at the scene. Neal, Kelly and Stark were seniors at St. Regis High School in Rosemount. Arrangements for Neal's and Kelly's funerals are not yet available.

JOUR 112
December 1997

From the information presented below, write a news story. The story will be used to assess change in writing skills from midterm to final exam.

1. Write the story as though it will appear in tomorrow's *StarTribune*. All the events described below occurred today.
2. Write a maximum of 250 words.
3. Write for no longer than 30 minutes.

This information has been obtained from Rosemount police:

Donna L. Neal, 18, of 34 E. 139th Terrace, Rosemount; Angela Kelly, 18, of 263 Blue Ridge Blvd., Rosemount; and Colleen M. Stark, 17, of 534 Lexington Square, Rosemount; were on their way home from shopping at Mall of America at 3:30 p.m. Neal was driving her car, a 1996 Toyota Corolla, with Kelly and Stark as passengers.

Neal's eastbound car went out of control on I-494 in Mendota Heights, just before the Robert Street exit, crossing into the westbound lane and hitting the driver's side of a tractor-trailer truck. The truck driver, Robert White, 56, of Kansas City, Mo., was hauling a load of office furniture for O'Sullivan Industries of Lamar, Mo. He was not hurt.

Stark was taken to St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center in serious condition. Neal and Kelly died at the scene. Neal, Kelly and Stark were seniors at St. Regis High School in Rosemount. Arrangements for Neal's and Kelly's funerals are not yet available.

This information comes from Tom O'Sullivan, Jr., executive vice president of O'Sullivan Industries:

"We're obviously glad to hear that our driver, Bob White, was not injured, but we were sorry to hear about the loss of the girls in the car. Our sympathy and condolences go out to their families and friends."

O'Sullivan also says the load of furniture in the truck was to have been delivered to retailers in Wisconsin. It was valued at $265,000.

This information comes from the Rev. John O'Malley, principal of St. Regis High:

"We just can't believe this has happened. Most of the students were gone for the day by the time we heard of the accident, but I expect they'll be dazed and shocked by this. Our faculty will be grieving, too. Donna and Angela were lovely young women. They participated in all kinds of school activities. We'll miss them."

APPENDIX B:

News Story Content Analysis Criteria

News Story Content Analysis Coding Sheet

ID ___________ Semester and year________________ Instructor_______________

Circle one: Baseline Midterm Final

Lead:

Two teens died	yes	no (deduct 3 max)
One seriously injured	yes	no (deduct 2 max)
Day of week	yes	no (deduct 1)
I-494	yes	no (deduct 1)
Mendota Heights	yes	no (deduct 1)

Total deductions for lead __________

Second paragraph:

Names of three teens	yes	no (deduct 3 max)
Ages of teens	yes	no (deduct 3 max)
Additional crash details	yes	no (deduct 2 max)

Total deductions second paragraph ___________

Subsequent paragraphs:

Information about truck driver	yes	no (deduct 3 max)
Information about shopping	yes	no (deduct 3 max)
Funeral arrangements	yes	no (deduct 2 max)

Total deductions subsequent paragraphs ____________

For final only:

O'Malley quote or paraphrase	yes	no (deduct 3 max)
O'Sullivan quote or paraphrase	yes	no (deduct 3 max)

Total deductions quotes or paraphrases ___________

Total deductions page 1 __________

News Story Content Analysis Coding Sheet (page 2)

	Number	Maximum deduction	
Fact errors	_____	3 points each	Total deduction _______
Wordiness; awkwardness; use of passive voice when active voice possible	_____	2 points each	Total deduction _______
Omission of other facts	_____	2 points each	Total deduction _______
Editorializing	_____	2 points each	Total deduction _______
Sensationalizing	_____	3 points each	Total deduction _______
No attribution overall	_____	5 points	Total deduction _______
Incorrect quote or paraphrase style	_____	3 points each	Total deduction _______
Incorrect quote or paraphrase *attribution* style	_____	3 points each	Total deduction _______
AP style errors	_____	1 point each	Total deduction _______
Misspelled name	_____	2 points each	Total deduction _______
Misspelled words	_____	1 point each	Total deduction _______
Punctuation errors	_____	1 point each	Total deduction _______
Other grammar errors	_____	1 point each	Total deduction _______

Total deductions page 2 _________

Total deductions page 1 _________

Total deductions overall ________

75 - ________ = ____________ **STORY POINT TOTAL**
total deductions
overall

Ethical Pluralism:

Defining Its Dimensions

Media Ethics Interest Group
AEJMC
Baltimore, Maryland
August 5-8, 1998

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Ethical Pluralism:
Defining Its Dimensions

A new reporter takes her first job at a little newspaper on the Western Slope of Colorado. She is assigned to write stories about her community that reflect its best efforts, but at $8 an hour, she simply can't afford to pay her own way to every school play or fund-raising event. Her editor accepts free tickets for local activities, including all high school sports events, and instructs his reporters to use them.

The editor, who is also the publisher, is on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. He has asked the reporter to fly to Denver for an environmental conference on cleaning up uranium mine tailings, which contaminate much of the fill dirt used under roads, homes, schools and businesses throughout her town. She's thrilled at the assignment, until she finds out she'll be flying over the Rockies on a corporate jet provided by Red River Mines, the largest uranium mining company in the West and her town's biggest employer.

What's an ethical reporter to do? She thinks she knows what's right -- what her personal and journalistic ethics are -- but her real-life experience is complicating her philosophy. Bluntly put, she knows that if she does not accept the "freebies," she won't be able to write her stories. She's not at all sure that others in the community would object. She also knows the stories she writes are subject to the publisher's ideas about what's good for the community. And she knows that if she doesn't do it, someone else will.

Somehow, the standard codes of ethics she learned about and embraced in journalism school simply don't seem to apply.

Or do they?

A survey of 231 weekly and daily newspaper editors suggests that so-called "ethical dilemmas" can be resolved differently by journalists who nevertheless cite "professional ethics" as having the most influence on their decisions. This raises an interesting question: Do professional codes of ethics provide so little guidance that any decision is defensible? Clearly the answer is no, as shown in this study and others that have preceded it. Journalists make difficult decisions in different circumstances, but they do so within generally agreed-upon boundaries. Media ethicist Deni Elliott calls this "ethical pluralism," a concept this paper will define and then test, using the data gathered in the aforementioned study, to try to identify its components and their influence on ethical decisionmaking.

This study also raises a practical question: Can a code of ethics actually provide some guidance for working journalists? Theoretical discussions help illuminate the problems, but they provide few answers. The Society of Professional Journalists' recently adopted code of ethics is a strong beginning. Next, journalists must confront head on the inherent and unanswered hierarchical questions embedded in codes of ethics and acknowledge the external factors that predict which journalists have the freedom to act "ethically."

The following discussion is organized into three parts: the first reviews similar studies as well as philosophical approaches to ethical decisionmaking in order to offer a clear conceptual definition of ethical pluralism; the second section describes the study itself and the statistical methods used to analyze it; and the third section describes and discusses the results of the study to try to identify the factors in an editor's background and the newspaper's structure that are the strongest predictors of newsroom decisions. The conclusion challenges academics and practitioners to accept a new way of thinking about ethics, one that is flexible and inclusive enough to provide real guidelines for real people making real decisions rather than excluding those journalists for whom doing the right thing carries a cost in community attachment or simple dollars that they can't absorb.

Absolutism, relativism and pluralism

Ethics and moral philosophy are concerned with how people should live, with the kinds of goals they should have and how they should treat others.[1] The philosophical poles in ethics are embedded in absolutism and relativism. Absolutists believe that moral standards are both universal and objective; relativists believe that moral standards are always relative to something else.[2] Absolutists contend that absolute moral standards exist and that a society's or a group's standards are moral only if they agree with the absolute standards; generally accepted codes of ethics might be defined as absolute standards. On the other hand, relativists argue that moral standards cannot exist outside of societal moral codes and that people can only act morally in relationship to their own group's expectations.[3]

Critics of absolutist theories say that such approaches ignore the very real competition for primacy among ethical principles and provide no guidance in resolving conflicts among various ethical duties or proscriptions. In practice, for example, an absolutist, by-the-code journalist might be hard pressed to do more than print school lunch menus without violating someone's privacy. On the other hand, critics of relativism contend that its approach can be used to justify almost any decision, without attempting to determine the "right" course of action.

Few media professionals argue for absolute standards of ethical behavior, but the relativist position also draws much criticism, for it simply doesn't provide cogent, dependable guidelines for making decisions. Elliott contends that media professionals do have some essential shared values – absolute values, if you will – and that variation in the application of those values to newsroom decisions is pluralistic rather than relative; that is, within the limits of a set of shared professional values, a variety of ethically defensible decisions can be made.

Elliott says that journalists share three basic values, which can be expressed as goals:

> 1. News accounts should be accurate, balanced, relevant and complete;
> 2. These accounts should be published and broadcast without hurting people;
> 3. Readers and viewers should be given the information that they need.[4]

Elliott's essential shared values need to be expanded, however, to include the notion of editorial independence. I would argue, in fact, that editorial independence is critical and antecedent to all other journalistic values. Journalists can not achieve accuracy, balance, relevance and completeness in their news stories if they are subject to overt or subtle pressures to withhold or tweak information. Those pressures can often be traced to financial dependence or multiple allegiances in a community.

The high moral ground of journalistic ethics often looks as if it is reserved for a newspaper insulated from its community by financial independence and the depth of its editorial staff. In most codes of ethics, journalists are admonished to pay their own way, hold themselves aloof from their communities and honor the public's right to know above all else. SPJ's new code, adopted in September 1996, continues to urge journalists to fulfill their obligation to seek and report the truth; and to acknowledge their responsibility for intelligent, objective, accurate and fair reporting. Journalists are expected to do so while respecting the dignity, privacy, rights and well-being of others.

The Statement of Principles of the American Society of Newspaper Editors declares that the First Amendment "places on newspaper people a particular responsibility" to pursue "a standard of integrity proportionate to the journalist's singular obligation." That obligation is defined as serving the general welfare by providing news and opinion that enables people "to make judgments on the issues of the time."

In the course of fulfilling that mission, journalists are encouraged to "avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety as well as any conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict. They should neither accept anything nor pursue any activity that might compromise or seem to compromise their integrity." Truth and accuracy are paramount, but again common standards of decency are to be upheld.

Formal codes have few guidelines for resolving the murky ethical dilemmas that pit one mandate against another. In practice, according to Philip Meyer, it is the right to privacy that generally gives way when it conflicts with other values.[5]

Elliott issued a challenge of sorts in describing her theory of pluralism, writing, "Essential shared values cannot be 'proven' through surveys or other nose-counting techniques."[6] She is correct, of course, that statistics cannot "prove" a theory, but the data generated by this study certainly lend support to her claim. As will be discussed in more detail in a later section of this paper, newspaper editors cite professional ethics – the canonized version of essential shared values – as the primary determinant of their decisions in a variety of hypothetical situations.

Other studies have approached the same general questions from different perspectives. Research sponsored by SPJ in 1992 collected data from 304 daily newspapers and television stations on the use of codes of ethics. Since circulation data was included, the research highlighted some differences between large- and small-circulation daily newspapers. The researchers found that, in general, "larger newspapers and those with written codes tend to be more restrictive ... regarding the massaging of quotes, staff members' community involvement, selling papers on the basis of graphics and packaging, and giving reporters, rather than editors, credit for judging what constitutes professional behavior."[7]

David Pritchard and Madelyn P. Morgan compared responses to hypothetical ethical dilemmas of reporters at two Indianapolis daily newspapers, only one of which had a written code of ethics.[8] The study revealed no differences attributable to the presence of a code. "The results of this study provide no support for the assumption that ethics codes directly influence the decisions journalists make," the authors contend. "These results suggest that scholars and practitioners err if they assume that the promulgation of formal norms such as ethics codes directly influences journalistic behavior."[9] Pritchard and Morgan suggest that formal codes are likely only one factor in journalistic behavior and that unwritten professional norms are strong predictors of journalists' choices.[10]

Another study involved 155 community newspapers (including 59 weeklies and 96 dailies) in the Midwest. The researchers asked editors to prioritize production, circulation, advertising and news-editorial from most to least important as "concerns for decisions you make on your paper."[11] News-editorial was ranked first by editors of all the papers, regardless of size, but advertising ranked higher among editors of weeklies than it did among other editors. The most frequently mentioned issue volunteered under a "toughest decisions" question was whether to publish negative news about individuals, an affirmation of Elliott's second essential shared value (that news should be disseminated without hurting people). However, the researchers did note that the pluralism inherent in urban settings, including a number of groups competing for power, tends to insulate editors from pressure from any one of them.[12]

Ethical considerations were subsumed in the Midwest study under the general idea of "news-editorial constraints," muddying any potential conclusions about the relative influence of professional ethics in the editors' decisions. Overall, the study concludes, the basic value of "information dissemination may be a characteristic of the journalism profession that transcends structural differences."[13] In other words, newsworthiness appears to be one of the essential shared values to which Elliott refers and helps define what she means by giving readers the information that they need.

In 1994, Paul Voakes asked 118 Wisconsin journalists to respond to three hypothetical ethical dilemmas to try to tease out the relative influence of a number of factors on their decisions. Voakes observes that media ethics has generally been assumed to arise out of individual moral reasoning but, he says, "it seems far more likely that ethical behavior occurs not in a social vacuum but amid a dynamic swirl of social factors."[14] He supplemented his survey with personal interviews and came to the following conclusion: Other people (both in and out of the media), occupational norms, and company policies exert the most powerful influences on ethical decision-making. Although Voakes found that these social influences were much more important than structural or demographic factors, he also pointed out that the influence of various factors – as well as the decisions themselves – varied according to the circumstances of the reporter. No one factor could be identified as acting either alone or in combination with other specific factors as a predictor of journalists' ethical decisions.[15]

A review of these studies points out quite clearly that blatantly unethical behavior is not acceptable. In trying to ascertain the influences on ethical decision-making, all of the above researchers asked journalists to respond to difficult situations. None of the researchers reported disturbing trends toward unethical solutions. Instead, a review of this literature finds a great deal of support and explanation for Elliott's notion of ethical pluralism.

"Ethical" in this sense is intended to include not only individual moral reasoning but professional norms. James W. Carey, in his article "Journalists Just Leave,"[16] contends that most journalists bring their personal ethics with them to their jobs, rather than adopting those codes of ethics that are offered to them. Most journalists have no real grounding in ethical studies, he says, a point that ethicist Eugene Goodwin echoes: "You don't see newsrooms cluttered with the works of Jeremy Bentham, the founder of utilitarianism, or Immanuel Kant."[17]

But it does seem that personal and professional ethics are inextricably bound together. "The right thing to do" is the basis for decision-making on both levels; Voakes puts it well when he writes: "Journalism ethics (is) quite simply ... the task of choosing, in the course of doing journalistic work, some behaviors over others on the basis of a moral judgment."[18]

The notion of pluralism has not been much discussed in the literature on media ethics. In its dictionary definition, pluralism encompasses the ideas that no single explanation or view can account for all the phenomena of life and that numerous explanations for a single phenomena can coexist. In some ways, defining what ethical pluralism is *not* is the key to understanding what it *is*. Elliott is clear that ethical pluralism is not relativism, since relativism acknowledges no absolutes. The fact that some decisions are difficult to make does not mean that there are no right answers, she contends. Indeed, she says, "Finding some answers that are absolutely wrong is an important step in solving the problem."[19]

Meyer, writing in his introduction to a book on his massive 1983 ASNE survey, borrows a metaphor from philosopher Lawrence Kohlberg. He says journalists carry in their heads, and possibly in their hearts as well, a "bag of virtues." Confronted with an ethical dilemma and inspired by a desire to please both peers and the public, Meyer says, "they fumble around in the bag for whatever virtue seems to fit the occasion."[20] Elliott might argue that the point is *not* that journalists have no guidelines on which virtue to pull out of the bag, but that there *is* a "bag," – and it contains a number of ethical alternatives.

The Survey

Editors at 579 daily and weekly newspapers were mailed an eight-page survey in March 1996. Reminder postcards and duplicate surveys were sent as needed, generating 231 responses for a response rate of 41 percent. The responses were proportional geographically to the mailing and properly representative of daily and weekly newspapers of all sizes. The questionnaire was directed to an editor likely to work closely with reporters on a daily basis and who also had at least some management responsibilities. At smaller newspapers, that editor was often the publisher as well. At larger papers, the survey was generally sent to city or metro editors or their assistants.

Many of the editors who responded to the survey found it challenging and thought-provoking, although admittedly some others were quite frank with their opinions of academic research. The study's author was chided regularly by small-town editors that the questionnaire seemed designed for larger papers and equally often by big-city editors that the very same survey was obviously designed for smaller papers.

The editors' comments and responses were provoked by 16 scenarios, including the following six that form the core of this study:

1. Your newspaper gets a discount on company-sponsored dinners at a local restaurant, which is one of your largest advertisers and co-owned by the publisher's spouse. A reporter is offered the discount when she brings her family to the restaurant. Should she accept the discount?

2. The largest utility company in town has offered to co-sponsor your newsroom's softball team, which otherwise can't afford uniforms. The publisher's daughter is the star pitcher for the team, and her parents are big fans. The utility company not only advertises regularly, but its public information officer provides good leads for stories. Should your newspaper accept the offer?

3. Your sports editor supports a large family, so to make a little extra income he officiates at local sports events. He assures you he doesn't report on games he officiates and contends that by officiating, he gets closer to players and coaches, which in turn results in better overall coverage. What action would you take?

4. Your paper depends on stringers for stories from outlying communities in your circulation area. They are paid by the story and are not reimbursed for expenses. The publisher angrily reports that one of your most valuable stringers uses her connection with the paper to get

free admission to local plays, community festivals and sports events, some of which she covers. How would you handle the situation?

5. A local company, a steady advertiser, has offered to fly a reporter to its national association's annual convention, where industry experts will debate the environmental safety of a new manufacturing process to be used in your town. You can't afford to send a reporter. Would you accept?

6. Your veteran city hall reporter is married to a schoolteacher who becomes increasingly involved in local politics. The teacher campaigns vigorously for the winning mayoral candidate, then takes a job as the mayor's aide. Would you take any action?

For each scenario, editors were offered a variety of responses from which to choose. Some scenarios spurred a general consensus; for example, nearly 75 percent of the respondents said the reporter probably or definitely shouldn't take the restaurant discount. The editors split, 55 percent to 45 percent, against taking the softball uniforms. Most, 61 percent, would allow the sports editor to continue moonlighting but reassign the spouse of the mayor's aide. But the stringer's "freebies" and the corporate free flight were much harder to resolve (complete results are shown in the Appendix.) The editors were then asked to rank various influences on their response, such as professional ethics, newsworthiness of the story, influence of advertisers, influence of the publisher or other business executive, assessment of community reaction, the newspapers' or reporters' ability to pay their own way, and the editor's concern for an individual's well-being. In each of the six, the percentage of editors choosing professional ethics or newsworthiness (a dimension of professional ethics) was statistically significant.

The survey also collected, among other demographic data, information on circulation and the number of reporters at each paper, whether the paper had a written code of ethics, reporters' pay scales, and the editor's professional training and community involvement.

Ethical Pluralism in Action

The following are some of the ways ethical pluralism is articulated by this cross-section of weekly and daily newspaper editors. In their responses to the survey's hypothetical scenarios, these editors indicated that some journalistic behaviors were clearly unacceptable. Overwhelmingly, for example, they chose to fire a reporter who fabricated a satanic cult story, a "no-brainer" decision as one respondent put it. But other decisions were not so clear-cut, despite the fact that professional ethics was cited as the most influential factor in their decisions in 11 of the 16 scenarios. Newsworthiness was selected as most influential in four scenarios, and personal concern for someone's well-being was ranked first in another. Newsworthiness and the desire to avoid harm are clearly identified as two of Elliott's shared essential values; therefore, it is reasonable to include them under the general rubric of professional ethics.

The result is that we find editors working in large and small communities making different decisions using the same rationale: professional ethics. They've established the outside limits of acceptable behavior, but within those boundaries, it appears that a number of responses are justifiable. From the data at hand, then, we will try to answer the following questions:

1. Given that most editors are attempting to act ethically, or are, at the very least citing ethics as have the most influence on their decision, are there recognizable patterns in the way editors respond to ethical dilemmas?

2. If there are such patterns, what demographic, structural, professional and personal factors might account for them?

To answer the first question, we will first analyze the relationships among the six scenarios chosen for this analysis – each chosen because it clearly offers one response that is more ethically "correct" than the others. To try to answer the second question, we will explore statistically the relative influences of four sets of variables: the editors' sex and experience, the newspapers' structural characteristics, the influences of professional norms, and the editors' involvement in the community.

In order to compare answers to the above scenarios, the questionnaire responses were coded numerically so that higher numbers roughly correspond to responses that represent more strict conformance to generally accepted ethical guidelines. This allowed us to compare responses across several scenarios to see if a decision-making pattern emerges. To try to detect that pattern, a statistical technique called factor analysis has been used to examine the responses and identify those that are connected by virtue of their correlations to each other. Ideally, factor analysis produces two or more groups of responses, or factors, that are quite distinct from each other. This analysis produced two factors, as reported in Table 1.

The Independent Spenders

The first dimension, comprising responses to the free flight, restaurant discount and stringer freebie dilemmas, appears to represent a specific financial decision; the editors represented by this group of responses have been dubbed the "independent spenders." The decisions to turn down the free flight, refuse the restaurant discount and require the stringer to pay for event tickets share a common ground: the newspaper's ability to pay its own way, either directly by virtue of its own budget or indirectly through the wages it pays its employees.

This group's financial resources help them move closer to the absolutist end of the ethical scale. With money to spend, these editors can go about the business of reporting the news with fewer worries about breaches of professional ethics. Their financial independence is especially beneficial in enabling them to pursue the goal articulated in the third of Elliott's values: Readers and viewers should be given the information that they need.

The Appearance Avoiders

The second dimension is constructed by the responses to the remaining scenarios: the reporter with a politically active spouse, the moonlighting sports editor, and softball uniform offer. This group of editors has been dubbed the "appearance avoiders" because they share a strong interest in avoiding not only a conflict of interest, but also the appearance of a conflict of interest. Of special interest here, however, are the editor's responses to the softball uniform offer. They contribute somewhat strongly to both factors, with the edge going to the "appearance avoiders." Although this may appear contradictory at first, it makes sense theoretically; editors at newspapers who can afford to do so are more likely to turn down the free uniforms and editors concerned about the utility company's name emblazoned on his players' uniforms are likely to reject the offer as well.

The editors in this group are also moved toward "more ethical" choices in the other two scenarios comprising this dimension of ethical pluralism by their financial independence. But in this case, that independence means a larger staff and more room to manipulate editorial assignments to avoid possible conflicts of interests.

Accounting for the difference

The next step is to explore the influence of various factors on these two dimensions of ethical pluralism. The results of the multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 2. Clearly, the demographic variables of sex and journalism experience of the editors are not significant predictors of their choices, accounting for a minuscule 1 percent of the variance in each dimension.

The next group of structural variables – circulation size, frequency of publication (weekly or daily), the number of reporters and their pay scales, is quite significant, however; those variables taken together account for 23 percent of the variance in the "independent spenders" responses and 26 percent of the variance in the "appearance avoiders" responses. A closer look reveals, however, that two different influences are at work here. The reporters' pay provides the only significant effect on the "independent spenders"; the respondents appear to feel that newsrooms with adequate budgets and well-paid reporters simply don't have to accept "freebies" to get the job done. Circulation and frequency of publication are the significant factors in predicting the responses of the "appearance avoiders," indicating that editors at larger daily papers have more room to maneuver. This difference between the factors appears despite the fact that each factor is significantly correlated to the other; as might be expected, daily papers are more likely to have larger circulations, more reporters and a higher pay scale.

In the third block, the first variable shows the influence of a written code of ethics at the editor's newspaper and the second gauges the influence of the editor's involvement in professional activities. In the fourth block, the variable measures the impact of the editor's community involvement, such as voting behavior and volunteer activities. Neither of these final two blocks of variables significantly increase the amount of variance accounted for in the two dimensions.

Conclusions

Although in general the results of this study should be considered exploratory, they are provocative. It is time to for journalists to think about "doing ethics" as a pluralistic exercise. It is apparent that journalists do not seriously disagree on the outer limits of professional behavior; this study supports that observation, as have many others before it. But it is equally apparent that within those limits, a number of appropriate and defensible choices can be made – and are made daily.

It may be instructive to listen to some of the voices of the editors who responded to this survey. Individually, many journalists seem to have surveyed their communities and arrived at workable solutions to everyday problems. A weekly newspaper editor offered this thoughtful comment: "Consistent policy is our best asset when it comes to analyzing stories/coverage reaction, etc. My editor and I often talk long about how we are being fair to all parties involved, yet not compromise our policies."

The editor of a small daily echoed her colleague's comments: "Some of my answers may seem cold and uncaring, but in a small community especially, news staff must be consistent (and) not concern itself with reaction of others, or it will lose credibility."

It is also interesting to look carefully at the editors' responses to the scenario constructed for the hypothetical reporter in the introduction. Those editors who cited professional ethics as most influential generally agreed on their response: 71.2

percent would decline the offer of the free flight. Among editors who selected a reason other than professional ethics, such as newsworthiness, only 20 percent would decline. And overall, 62 percent of editors at papers with circulations of more than 10,000 would turn down the free flight; only 37 percent of the editors at smaller papers would do the same. The multiple regression analysis points to one explanation: the more financial freedom editors have (represented roughly by the pay scale of reporters) the more strictly they can observe the canons of professional ethics that would preclude acceptance of the free flight offer. The high degree of correlation among all the factors in the "structural" block helps account for a number of the editors' comments as well. Some were simply practical in their responses: "We have a small staff and cannot afford the loss of time regardless of ability to pay," a weekly editor said. Some were adamant about seeking an alternative: "I'd find a way to get money from (the) budget to send a reporter," declared a daily newspaper editor. "Good question!" noted another weekly editor. "Coverage of a bona fide debate might make this one worthwhile."

Implicit in the latter remark is an acceptance of ethical pluralism. This editor is willing to consider some tradeoffs to get the news his readers need. Others are quite clear about the difficulties of making ethical choices in differing situations. "Having worked as both reporter and publisher/editor, I've experienced both sides of the situations you've used," commented one weekly editor. "What must be remembered is that, regardless of a paper's policies, such ethical decisions must be dealt with on a case by case basis."

A daily editor wrote: "I'm not satisfied with all of my answers. My editors would make some of these calls, and as assistant editor I'd merely implement them. Perhaps it shouldn't make a difference, but working in a smaller community means sometimes we don't concern ourselves with conflicts of interest others might ...."

One disheartened weekly journalist offered this: "Our big problem isn't ethics; it's diminishing resources and keeping morale up in tough times." Perhaps unintentionally, he identified a key variable in this analysis: Financial independence is a strong predictor of ethical decisions when money is involved.

Another weekly editor defined ethical pluralism in elegantly simple terms: "We are from a small town, small staff. Things are much more informal here. We try to work hard supporting the community. I know many of my answers are based on *our* circumstances."

This study suggests that it is time to rethink our thinking about ethics, to accept the boundaries that our profession has drawn and to find a way to help ourselves make better decisions within those parameters. A first step is to embrace an ethical pluralism that can guide good journalists to good decisions. The Society of Professional Journalists has recently taken a giant step in that direction by adopting a code of ethics whose language acknowledges ethical pluralism: "Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived. Remain free of associations and activities *that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.* Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and shun secondary employment, political involvement, public office and service in community organizations *if they compromise journalistic integrity"* [emphasis added].

This study suggests that the "new" SPJ approach simply reflects what newspaper editors have been doing all along. Other professional organizations should adopt similar codes, legitimating ethical pluralism. And, journalists must use the pluralistic language of the new codes to think carefully about their choices, not to justify blatantly bad decisions. The difficult questions of how to assign primacy to one standard over another will remain, but this study suggests that journalists at newspapers with more resources compromise less often. Finally, publishers must acknowledge that money makes a difference in the newsroom; editorial independence, reflected in a well-staffed newsroom with an adequate budget, may not be an infallible predictor of ethical decisions, but it most certainly appears to facilitate them.

Table 1

Factor Loadings (Principal Components, Oblique rotation) of 6 Ethical Pluralism Indicators

	Dimensions of Ethical Pluralism	
	Independent Spenders	Appearance Avoiders
Independent Spenders		
Free flight	**.71**	.17
Restaurant discount	**.67**	.45
Stringer "freebies"	**.64**	-.03
Appearance Avoiders		
Mayor's aide is spouse	-.06	**.80**
Moonlighting sports editor	.37	**.67**
Softball uniforms	.61	**.63**
Correlation between factors:		
Independent Spenders	1.00	
Appearance Avoiders	.22	1.00

Table 2
Predicting Dimensions of Ethical Pluralism

	Dimensions of Ethical Pluralism	
	Independent Spenders	Appearance Avoiders
Demographics		
Sex (female)	-.06	-.07
Experience	.04	.08
R^2 (%)	1%	1%
Structural Variables		
Circulation	.08	.35**
Number of reporters	.05	- .09
Reporters' pay	.37**	.12
Publication frequency	.07	.22**
Incremental R^2 (%)	23%**	26%**
Professional Variables		
Ethics code (yes)	.09	- .01
Professional activity	.08	.05
Incremental R^2 (%)	1%	0%
Participation Variable		
Community involvement	.04	- .04
Incremental R^2 (%)	0%	0%

Notes:

(1) All increments to R^2 are after controls for all previous blocks.
(2) All betas are after entry.
(3) ** $p \leq .01$

Appendix

1. Should a reporter accept the **restaurant discount**?

Definitely yes	Probably yes	Probably not	**Definitely not**
8.8%	16.7%	20.7%	**53.7%**

(Percentage choosing as most influential)
82.5% Professional ethics 9.0% Reporter's ability to pay

2. Should your newspaper accept the uniform offer?

Definitely yes	Probably yes	Probably not	**Definitely not**
16.1%	28.6%	18.3%	**37.1%**

(Percentage choosing as most influential)
62.7% Professional ethics 19.1% Newspaper's ability to pay

3. What would you do about the **moonlighting sports editor**:

a) take no action **61.4%**	b) assign him a news beat 5.7%
c) require him to choose between jobs 32.5%	d) fire him 0.4%

(Percentage choosing as most influential)
74.9% Professional ethics 24.0% Assessment of community reaction

4. How would you handle the **stringer's "freebie"** issue?
6.9% a) fire the stringer **45.9% b) tell the stringer to start paying her own way**
14.7% c) take no action 32.6% d) change the reimbursement policy

(Percentage choosing as most influential)
68.1% Professional ethics 18.0% Stringer's ability to pay her own way

5. How would you handle the **free flight** offer?
45.5% a) decline the offer
0.0% b) decline the offer and write an editorial decrying it
32.0% c) accept, but report the fare payment in stories about the convention
22.5% d) accept the offer and remind the reporter to maintain his objectivity

(Percentage choosing as most influential)
55.0% Professional ethics 39.6% Judgment of the story's newsworthiness

6. How would you handle the **reporter married to the mayor's aide**?

a) fire the reporter 0.4%	b) counsel the reporter to maintain objectivity 25.6%
c) **reassign the reporter** **72.2%**	d) remove the reporter's byline from city hall stories 1.8%

(Percentage choosing as most influential)
82.9% Professional ethics 17.2% Assessment of reporter's overall ability

Notes

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[1] Peter K. McInerney and George W. Rainbolt, ***Ethics.*** New York: HarperCollins,1994, p.1.

[2] McInerney, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[3] McInerney, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[4] Deni Elliott, *All is Not Relative: Essential Shared Values and the Press*, **Journal of Mass Media Ethics** 3, no. 1, 1988, pp. 28-32.

[5] Philip Meyer, **Ethical Journalism.** New York: Longman, 1987, p. 22.

[6] Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[7] Jay Black, Bob Steele, and Ralph Barney, **Doing Ethics in Journalism: A Handbook with Case Studies.** Greencastle, Indiana: The Sigma Delta Chi Foundation and The Society of Professional Journalists, 1993 , p.205.

[8] David Pritchard and Madelyn Peroni Morgan, *Impact of Ethics Codes on Judgments by Journalists: A Natural Experiment*, **Journalism Quarterly** 66, Winter 1989, pp. 934-941.

[9] Pritchard and Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 941.

[10] Pritchard and Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 941.

[11] G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien, and P. J. Tichenor, *Structure and Constraints on Community Newspaper Gatekeepers*, **Journalism Quarterly** 66, Winter 1989.

[12] Donohue et al., *op. cit.*, p. 809.

[13] Donohue et al., *op. cit.*, p. 812.

[14] Paul S. Voakes, **Social Determinants of Ethical Decision-Making in the Newsroom,** diss. University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1994, Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Dissertation Services, 1994, p.15.

[15] Voakes, *op. cit.* , pp. 8-10.

[16] James W. Carey, *Journalists Just Leave: The Ethics of an Anomalous Profession*, **Ethics and the Media,** ed. Maile-Gene Sagen. Iowa City: Iowa Humanities Board, 1987, p.7. The title of Carey's article is taken from an observation by the director of an ethical studies program, who said other professionals complete the courses and then go forth to reform themselves. Journalists, however, just leave.

[17] H. Eugene Goodwin, **Groping for Ethics in Journalism.** Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1987, p. 23.

[18] Voakes, *op. cit.*, p.14.

[19] Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[20] Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. vii.

Downsizing, Rightsizing, and Other Euphemisms: The Questionable Ethics of Some Corporate Communications

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Abstract

Downsizing, Rightsizing, and Other Euphemisms: The Questionable Ethics of Some Corporate Communications

The use of euphemisms by corporate communicators in messages to employees and the public about massive firings is common practice, yet can be ethically troublesome given that euphemisms, by definition, are a form of deception. This paper examines the use of euphemisms, shows how their use violates the ethical principles of organizational and public communication, and discusses how their use can be detrimental to companies. Work by George Cheney and Philip Tompkins and by Pamela Shockley-Zalabak is used for a theoretical framework. An alternative and more ethical means of corporate communication is offered, based on Cheney and Tompkins and Shockley-Zalabak.

Downsizing, Rightsizing, and Other Euphemisms: The Questionable Ethics of Some Corporate Communications

Euphemistic language has become common practice in employee communications at U.S. companies, particularly when corporations announce multiple employee firings. The clarity of the proverbial "pink slip" that announces, "You're fired," has been replaced at most companies with the mushy words that an employee's job is being eliminated because of "downsizing," "rightsizing," "re-engineering," "unfortunate layoffs," "involuntary separations," or other ambiguous terms chosen by professional communicators or other company representatives to soften the reality that real people are losing real jobs.

Statement of Purpose

Others have discussed general ethical responsibilities in public relations and organizational communications (Seib and Fitzpatrick, 1995; Baker, 1993; Barton, 1993; Bivens, 1992; Kruckeberg, 1992; McElreath, 1993; Sims, 1992; and Wright, 1989). However, specific discussion of the ethics of euphemisms in employee and public communications has been largely ignored in the literature, despite their frequent use in company communications. Of course, a comprehensive evaluation of using euphemisms in public relations or organizational communications cannot be accomplished within the confines of a single paper. Consequently, this paper focuses on the ethical issues surrounding the conscious use of euphemisms for deceptive purposes, specifically in company communications to employees and the public. Our discussion is further confined specifically to communications concerning large-scale employee firings, when the social consequences can be significant.

We will first discuss the recent use of euphemisms in public and employee communications in the announcement and defense of large-scale employee firings. We then discuss the general ethical duties of companies when they are communicating with employees and the public and introduce the communication strategies offered by Cheney and Tompkins (1987) and Shockley-Zalabak (1988) as appropriate ones for judging the ethics of internal and external organizational communications. We will then show how these constructs can be used to evaluate such communications. And finally, this paper will discuss the benefits to a company that employs an ethical communication strategy when announcing or defending job eliminations. Given the many ethical theories pertaining to communication (Johannesen, 1996), it is not the intent of this paper to argue that the ethical strategies used here are the only constructs that will lead a company to more ethical communications with its workers and the public. The intent is only to show that ethical standards are not unrealistic for companies facing unpleasant actions involving employees, and that an ethical communication actually can be beneficial to companies.

The Ethics of Euphemisms

In many social circumstances, euphemisms can be used to avoid embarrassment or to protect another's ego. For example, at a formal dinner party, a guest might ask for directions to the "little girls' room" to avoid the embarrassment of using the word "toilet," which is itself a euphemism that was coined so long ago that it is recognized as the plain-language version of the location being referred to.[1] Or a company that hauls residential garbage may give employees the title of "sanitation engineers" rather than the more traditional plain-language title of "garbage men" or "trash haulers." In each instance, little harm is done. The use of euphemisms in these instances satisfies the moral duty of "causing no unnecessary harm," and "nurturing others," respectively.[2]

Indeed, the business world is replete with euphemistic language. Advertisers often refer to the smallest size of a product as the "medium" size, or a deodorant maker refers to "perspiration" instead of "sweat"; descriptions often inflate through euphemistic language, so that a janitor becomes a "domestic engineer," a job becomes a "position," and pay is elevated to "remuneration." Business also uses euphemisms to deflate importance, such as when a nuclear power plant has an "event" rather than an "accident," an industrial plant releases "effluent" instead of "industrial waste," and accountants make an "adjustment downward," rather than plainly acknowledge a drop in stock prices. On other occasions, an euphemism is used to emphasize the economic factors of a company's action, such as when a company "disinvests," rather than redlines a geographic region or closes a retail outlet in a community.

Rawson (1981, 1-3) categorizes euphemisms as "positive" and "negative." Positive euphemisms inflate and magnify, making the euphemized item appear grander or more important, whereas negative euphemisms deflate and diminish, and each can be used consciously or unconsciously. Telling employees they are fired because of a "rightsizing" of the company is the use of a positive euphemism, making the firings more important to the company than the usual motivation, which is to cut expenses in order to increase profits. On the other hand, to refer to job losses as "layoffs" is a negative euphemism because the use of that particular word is to deflate the seriousness of the job loss, suggesting that the employees will eventually be recalled to work, when in fact that is not the company's intention.

The use of euphemisms by businesses is partially related to the bureaucratic nature of company structures, for the complexities of bureaucracies in and of themselves breed euphemistic language. Referring to the person in charge of a company as "chief executive officer" (CEO) instead of the "boss," for example, not only inflates the person's role, but also has a bureaucratic function of identifying the chain of command. Euphemistic language also often is tied to a company's desire to create positive images for its products, of course, or to accommodate cultural taboos which discourage the use of certain words in public. Kotex, for example, sells "personal care" products, and other companies sell "feminine hygiene" products. As Savan has noted, "the more scatological the product, the more euphemistic the [advertising] spot" (1994, 197).

By definition, however, an euphemism is a deception whenever it is used. Euphemisms are defined by Thomas (1990) as "the use of good words to hide bad ones." When used to avoid offending someone, euphemisms are acceptable in some contexts, although in other venues the same euphemism appears silly. It shows sensitivity to express sympathy to a widow for "the loss" of her husband. But in another context, such as in most contemporary newspaper obituaries, allowing a person to "pass away" or become "lost" instead of to "die" is considered ridiculous (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen and Ranley, 1996, 171; Baskette, Sissors and Brooks, 1992, 95-96). However, when euphemisms are used to purposely conceal "our inward anxieties, conflicts, fears, and shames," they become social doubletalk designed to mislead and are convenient words for people who "lie about what they are doing" (Rawson, 1981, 1-3). Dishonest euphemisms are "where the conscious elements of circumlocution and doubletalk loom large" (Rawson, 1981, 3). In this context, a euphemism "stands for 'something else,' and everyone pretends that the 'something else' doesn't exist" (Rawson, 1981, 3, 10). When used to deceive, euphemisms become ethically questionable (Bok, 1989, 18-22 and 57-61). They become lies "in the context of specific persons in specific situations" (Knapp and Comadena, 1979, 272; Newman, 1976).

Euphemisms About Massive Firings

Recently, companies have increasingly used euphemistic language when announcing and reporting massive firings of employees. Terms such as "downsizing," "rightsizing," "restructuring," and "involuntary separations" have shown up in annual reports, press releases, public statements, company newsletters and other communications with employees, stockholders, and the public. The 1993 annual report from Sears Roebuck, for example, commented that the retailer's "dramatic *downsizing* attracted a lot of attention" [emphasis added]. What Sears meant, of course, was that thousands of employees had been fired. Also that year, General Electric reported to shareholders that its plan "includes explicit programs that will result in the closing, *downsizing* and *streamlining* of certain production, service and administrative facilities worldwide" [emphasis added]. And IBM CEO Louis Gerstner reported that his highest priority during 1993 was to "rightsize" the computer firm (*Time*, 1994).

Management consultant Alan Downs observed: "Polite phrases like 'trimming down' or 'slimming' are often used to describe what is in reality newly unemployed workers' walking to their cars, pink slips in hand" (1995, 35). Between 1979 and 1996, approximately 43 million jobs were eliminated by American companies, which routinely used euphemisms when notifying the workers who held these jobs and the public (*New York Times*, 1996, 4).[3] As the *Times* noted,

> In an effort to somehow cauterize the emotional damage of the dismissals, managers have introduced a euphemistic layoff speak. Employees are downsized, separated, severed, unassigned. They are told that their jobs "are not going forward." . . . Today, layoff means a permanent irrevocable goodbye (1996, 11).

In addition, employee communication media carry messages that are "saccharine and platitudinous" and rarely explicitly tell workers whether they have a job or not (*Times*, 1996, 51).

Communications to the public, often with the aid of the business press, are also saccharine, ambiguous, and deceptive, promoting the image that massive firings are the only way companies can be competitive and profitable (Downs, 1995, 35-36). Even though there is considerable evidence that firing hundreds or thousands of workers can be counterproductive for most companies, public statements justifying the firings "either imply or state directly that these are good for the company," and polite euphemisms such as "rightsizing" or "preventive medicine" are used (Downs, 1995, 35). Public justifications, in other words, suggest the companies were bigger than they should be or had too many workers. In reality, most massive firings actually result from management's decision to cut short-term costs in order to boost quarterly results and do not honestly reflect a decision to produce less, give up market share, or halt a company's growth (Downs, 1995, 14-16). Many managers and investors, of course, believe that massive firings will benefit a company by reducing its costs, yet researchers have shown that significant cuts in workforce is actually harmful in the long run, making companies less flexible and less competitive, and besetting the company with numerous problems associated with low worker morale (Downs, 1995, 11-14). As Rawson points out, euphemistic doubletalk "helps the users fool themselves" as well (1981, 4).

The Ethical Duties

Humanist ethicists insist that communicators have an obligation to communicate in a nonviolent manner that preserves and enhances the ability of their audience to be rational and to make informed choices (Johannesen, 1996, 45-62). And dialogical ethicists require communicators to avoid monologues, promoting instead a dialogue in which the parties recognize that truth is elusive and make themselves accessible to and seriously consider feedback (Johannesen, 1996, 63-85).

In this view, when euphemistic language is used to deceive, restrict the rational humanity of others, eliminate or reduce the receiver's options, or maintain an unequal power balance by deflecting feedback or critical analysis, its use becomes ethically problematic (Buber, 1958; Bok, 1989, 1983; Weaver, 1971; Johnstone, 1981; Garrett, 1961). When a company spokesperson uses euphemisms in this way, he or she is what Weaver (1953) calls an "evil" speaker, reflecting the unethical "attitudes of exploitation, domination, possessiveness, selfishness, superiority, deception, manipulation, and defensiveness" (Johannesen, 1996, 74). Walton (1963), though speaking specifically of advertising, offers a framework that can be applied to employer-employee and company-public communications as well. Under the Waltonian approach, communications can be judged "by the degree to which they undermine the human capacity for rational decision, constrict free choice among alternatives, and foster largely selfish interests" (Johannesen, 1996, 46). The degree, then, that euphemisms are used to disrupt rational decisions, restrict free choice by the employee and the public, and solely benefit the company, is the extent to which euphemistic language is unethical.

As an evaluative tool, Cheney and Tompkins (1987) adapt Henry Johnstone Jr.'s "Basic Imperative" construct for communication, which incorporates many of the tenets of humanist and dialogical communication ethics, and apply it specifically to organizational communications. The Basic Imperative, Johnstone argues, compels communicators to "so act in each instance to encourage, rather than suppress, the capacity to persuade and be persuaded, whether that capacity in question is yours or another's" (Johnstone, 1981). To carry out this imperative, Johnstone argues, one must comply with four ethical duties: nonviolence, guardedness, accessibility, and empathy. Cheney and Tompkins interpret these duties for organizational communicators, and add the concept of identity from Kenneth Burke:

Nonviolence – Coercion, overt or subtle, is ethically suspect. When communicators in an organization insist that the company's message has a monopoly on truth, they roll over oppositional world-views and fail to allow audience members (employees and the public) the freedom to control their own destinies. One of the most obvious violations of this tenet is deception.

Guardedness – Avoid simply communicating the conventional wisdom. Be alert for information that requires a modification of the company's view. Don't overly use the institutional "we" in the company's internal communications because it can cut off opportunities for employees to disagree, offer conflicting information, and maintain a separate and realistic self-identity.

Accessibility – Communicators in organizations should be open to the possibility of being changed by the messages of others, or in other words of being persuaded. Don't block feedback by delivering monologue, instead of participating in and encouraging a dialogue.

Empathy – The communicator should sincerely listen to arguments, opinions, values, and assumptions of others and try to understand the situation from his or her audience's viewpoint and adjust company policies to honor that viewpoint (Cheney and Tompkins, 1987).

In addition, Shockley-Zalabak adapts to organizational communications the "Four Moralities" of Karl Wallace (1988). The Four Moralities are *Habit of Search*, wherein communicators constantly seek new information that will add to their own world-views; *Habit of Justice*, wherein communicators are fair and truthful in their assessment of information and when presenting their messages; *Habit of Preferring Public to Private Motivations*, which requires communicators to be motivated by what is best for everyone involved and to not hold hidden agendas; and the *Habit of Respect for Dissent*, meaning that communicators should be open to getting feedback from their audience (Wallace, 1955, 1-9). Shockley-Zalabak suggests that ethical organizational communicators

> thoughtfully analyze problems and issues, are open to diverse types and sources of information, conduct their deliberations openly without hidden agendas, and not only respect differing viewpoints but encourage disagreement . . .(1988, 329-330)

While Shockley-Zalabak mainly analyzes communications between employees, her analysis equally can apply to communications between the company and its employees, and between the company and the public.

Euphemistic Business Communications

The fundamental ethical problem stemming from the use of euphemisms when announcing and defending massive firings lies in the very nature of euphemisms: by definition, they are deceptive, and hence they violate the *prima facie* duty of truth-telling, Johnstone's Basic Imperative tenet of nonviolence and Wallace's Habits of Justice and of Preferring Public to Private Motivations. When a company characterizes the termination of a significant portion of its workforce as "downsizing" or "rightsizing" when it doesn't intend to reposition itself as a smaller company within the market other than in terms of number of employees and it doesn't intend to maintain its newly reconfigured size into perpetuity, it is being deceptive. Downsizing carries the connotation of a conscious decision to become a smaller company with fewer employees, less total production, a smaller market share, and lower net earnings. Rightsizing suggests that a company had too many employees, was producing too much, had too big of a market share, and made too much money, but now the company is the "right" size and has no need to grow. Yet, few companies are willing to accept the ramifications of these connotations. In fact, massive firings cause stock prices to rise in the short term, not because investors think the company will produce less or be satisfied with a smaller market share, but because they expect aggregate profits to increase (Downs, 1995, 14). Investors expect the company to maintain its pre-firings "size" and to grow, but with fewer employees.

As positive euphemisms, downsizing and rightsizing suggest that a company is carrying out a strategic plan to put the company on sounder footings. Such euphemisms place the firing of hundreds or thousands of workers and the myriad personal and social problems this causes in the best possible light, hiding the true reasons for the firings. But as with most euphemisms meant to deceive, they hide the fact that the motivations for the firings were more likely orchestrated to increase short-term stock values and allow upper management to appear no-nonsense, tough leaders; and they hide that the firings will probably make it difficult for the company to maintain its current level of quality, productivity, and profitability (Downs, 1995, 11-33). They also allow the company to cover up the disastrous consequences to families that have lost income and communities that have lost tax revenues and face increased social service needs. As Rawson points out, the euphemism's "real meaning is always worst than its apparent meaning" (1981, 10).

Downsizing and rightsizing also are deceptive by implying that the fired employees, by virtue of their being on the payroll, had caused the company to become bloated, noncompetitive, unproductive, and unprofitable. In fact, however, many companies undertake massive firings during a period of high profitability. Moreover, the firings can seriously disrupt projects that were under way, destroy employee morale, and restrict the company's ability to maintain profitability (Downs, 1995, 11-14).

Companies that employ such euphemisms fall prey to the hazards of all deceptions that cannot be rationally justified: Trust and credibility diminish. The trust between the company and its employees, ex-employees, and potential employees is damaged. Imagine the disgust of employees who survived the first rightsizing only to be told in following months that the company must downsize again. And the trust between the company and the public suffers as well. When trust is gone, credibility goes with it (Bok, 1989, 20-22; Knapp and Comadena, 1979; McCornack and Levine, 1990). Doublespeak, including euphemisms, is used by speakers to "snow their audience or they are technically and desperately hanging onto threads of truth. But people are often much smarter than the doublespeaker thinks, and threads aren't very strong, and the truth breaks" (Kominkiewicz, 1996). It may be unpleasant to announce that massive firings are being undertaken in order to increase stock value in the next quarter, boost profits, increase cash availability, and enhance the wealth of top executives and other shareholders (which should in itself be a warning about the social ethics of such a move, according to Bok [1989, 92-106]). But it would be honest, forthright, and plain-speaking.

In violation of Johnstone's necessary conditions of Guardedness and Accessibility and Wallace's Habits of Respect for Dissent and Search, euphemisms such as downsizing and rightsizing wrap what is distressing news to many workers and community members in a righteous cloak of terminology that stifles dialogue. Describing the action in such positive terms, fired workers, surviving employees, and harmed community members appear selfish and wrong-headed if they oppose the company's decision, and it discourages management from carefully planning the communication of negative news to employees and the communities that will ultimately bear the burden of the company's action. Noer (1993) has argued that euphemisms are used by people to distance or abstract themselves from displeasure or embarrassment. He explains:

> We have spawned a number of euphemisms for the act of separating people involuntarily from their jobs. It is easier for top executives to talk to bankers and security analysts about restructuring than to production

> workers about termination. Downsizing feels better than reduction-in-force, *and rightsizing has an almost moral ring to it.* Organizational leaders' invention of safe words is a clue to their repressed feelings and a window on their own survivor sickness (1993, 24 [emphasis added]).

Employees who are victims of "downsizing" or "rightsizing," instead, say, of a firing brought about by corporate shareholders and top executives who want to increase next quarter's returns, are often left feeling expendable, useless, unproductive, deficient. Why else would a company fire them in order to make itself more competitive and "right"? How are they to respond to the company's world-view without sounding petty? After all, they were fired for the good of the company.

Furthermore, the observations and opinions of employees who remain with the company and community members not directly affected by the firings are repressed by this same image of the company's act. By centering the company's message on how the massive firings will benefit the company's future competitiveness, management effectively silences all but those who are courageous enough to be seen as refusing to identify with the company's top management. After all, the conventional wisdom that accompanies a "downsizing" or "rightsizing" implies that without the firings the company would fail, everyone would lose their jobs, and communities beyond the immediate ones would be adversely affected. Moreover, when this world-view overtakes corporate communicators and public relations practitioners as they frame the company's decision in such easy, euphemistic terms, they grow unwilling to be persuaded that such a view is wrong, or even partially in error. Feedback, encouragement of dissent, and the search for new information – requirements of ethical communication – are stillborn and self-identity of others is inhibited.

Being empathetic, Johnstone's fourth requirement for ethical communication, requires corporate communicators and public relations practitioners to respect the humanity and the rights of those affected by the decisions being communicated. A company may be "downsizing" or "rightsizing," and seeing its stock values rise, but from the other side of the fence, the picture is much different. To ignore the suffering of separated and retained employees and the impact on the community implies the company cares about nothing but its own financial success. Describing the disruption of lives euphemistically as a sacrifice for the corporate good, particularly when the firings will in the long run harm the company, may ease the feelings of top executives, but it shows no respect for the workers affected. "Restructuring, in whatever guise, is traumatic and painful," Stevenson observes. "Restructuring much too frequently reverses the order of importance of the corporation's vital constituencies with employees coming dead last – and dead is a reasoned choice of words" (1992, 179). Through a monologue of corporate speech that characterizes events in sugary, moralistic terms about the benefit to the company, corporate communicators deny workers, ex-workers, and the affected public the right of self-description and the opportunity to share in the creation of meaning about the company's decision.

One negative backlash on the company when such arrogance occurs is that employees will strike back either in anger or black humor, whichever venue provides them with a means of getting their views heard. Purposive work disruptions are common in companies where employees face a degree of uncertainty over their futures or feel justified in sabotaging a company that has fired many of their friends but expects them to pick up the workload of the dismissed workers (Downs, 1995, 43-45). At Chase

Manhattan Bank in New York, management established an employee hotline to take queries from workers during a restructuring, but employees struck back by derisively labeling the hotline "1-800-PINK-SLIP (*Times*, 1996, 52). Kominskiewicz (1996) argues that organizational communication can become paralyzed during major changes if communication is not open and honest.

The duty of empathy, which is accentuated by an employer's considerable power over its employees, as well as the duty of reciprocity, call for corporation communicators to consider the information needs of employees, including those being dismissed. One researcher noted that in many of the company restructurings he studied, "employees were victims of the mushroom factor: They were kept in the dark while liberal amounts of fertilizer were spread over them," which cut off a vital constituency from meaningful information during a critical time for the organization (Stevenson, 1992, 180).

Conclusion: An Ethical Communication Strategy

When corporate communications are structured to meet the four tenets of Johnstone's Basic Imperative and Wallace's four habits of morality, means and techniques are subordinated to the purpose of the communications. Concentration is on respecting the needs of the corporation, its former and continuing employees, and the community.

Boeing Corp., which fired 23,000 employees in February 1993, committed its internal communication resources to an active, comprehensive strategy that in retrospect can be seen as meeting the tenets of ethical communication identified by Johnstone and Wallace. Showing concern for nonviolence, guardedness, accessibility, and empathy, as well as the habits of search, justice, public motivations rather than private ones, and respect for dissent, Boeing officials sought to provide employees information as it became available and before releasing it to the public; were open with employees about good news *and* bad; conducted employee surveys to quantify job satisfaction and obtain feedback; made each middle manager responsible and accountable for employee communications, including notification of employees who were dismissed when job cutbacks occurred; and included industry stories in employee newsletters to inform employees about the company's competition as well as about the company's operations, allowing a business partnership between the company and the employees to form. Dismissed employees were provided information on a interpersonal level during meetings between themselves and their managers, rather than being informed of their dismissal by human resources personnel or outside consultants.[4]

The effects, of course, were still devastating for the individual, dismissed employees and for the communities directly hit by the firings, but in Boeing's case, the company's candor smoothed the process, showed the employees their due respect, and lessened resentments and recriminations against the company, helping it through its time of internal crisis and mitigating any effects from use of euphemisms (Major, 1993).

For a company like Boeing, which was confronted with significant reductions in military contracts, massive firings are not unethical in and of themselves. Companies that decide to significantly trim their work forces, however, maintain their credibility and trust relationships by employing an ethical communication strategy that avoids deceptive euphemistic language. As a result, meaningful avenues of information for employees, former employees, and community members are maintained and the companies' constituencies are allowed to participate in creating the meaning of the company's actions. Employees, the community, and – significantly – the companies themselves gain a better understanding of the consequences and possibilities resulting from the companies' decisions.

An ethical communication strategy for companies based on Johnstone's Basic Imperative and Wallace's ethical habits would include the following:

1. Messages about company plans and decisions in honest, plain-language terminology and a concurrent conscious effort to avoid euphemisms.
2. Open communication channels that provide frequent updates on company plans and decisions, including good news and bad. The channels should provide a convenient means for audience feedback and a clear format for seriously responding to questions and suggestions. Newsletters; personal letters/memos; face-to-face conversations (particularly of bad news such as dismissal); group meetings at which questions may be asked; press releases and news-media stories with direct quotes from company officials of decision-making rank; teleconferences; employee surveys; and other communication media should be used. All communications should be managed by trained corporate communication personnel, but decision-making executive managers should also be available for questioning and response.
3. Company communications should inspire dialogue, not monologue. Messages should take into account that the company's version of the truth by its nature is biased, restricted, and incomplete. Messages should be adjusted to take into account new information, including that received via feedback channels. Deceptions should be forbidden, and errors of fact quickly corrected. When

> appropriate, company messages should include sincere acknowledgment of the consequences resulting from the company's decisions and actions. Messages should hold back only strictly defined proprietary information and should help employees and the public understand the broader context of the company's decisions and the decision-making process itself. Information about decisions and actions that will adversely affect employees or the community should be disseminated swiftly, and the company ought to acknowledge what it has not yet decided and what it does not know that may affect the final decision.

Admittedly, a company might decide it must "downsize" or "rightsize," but unless it goes beyond the easy euphemisms and the traditional paternalism when it communicates its decisions, its standing within the community it hopes to draw upon for its future success will tarnish, throwing into doubt its ability to survive. Of course a company must be allowed to protect itself by keeping secret certain proprietary information, but the identification of what information must be withheld from the public must be carefully and rationally determined. Public exposure of final decisions and the decision-making process provides a vital service to the company, for it provides the "test of publicity" championed by Bok (1989, 92-106) that forces companies to focus on their motivations and fairness. Frank, honest corporate communications show employees and community members the respect they deserve and enhances their ability to make rational choices, which is the fundamental obligation every communicator shares.

Notes

[1] In fact, the American cultural taboo about the elimination of personal bodily waste is so great that our language offers only euphemisms for naming the location in which this activity occurs. Rawson labels euphemisms that were coined so long ago that the user doesn't realize that they are euphemisms the "unconscious" use of euphemisms (1981, 3).

[2] W. David Ross (1988) identifies the ethical duties as being promise-keeping, fidelity, reparation, gratitude, prevention of and not doing harm, justice, beneficence, and self-improvement. In adapting Rossian duties to communicators, Patterson and Wilkins (1991, 13) add the duties of veracity and nurturing.

[3] There is disagreement over whether the job-loss totals calculated by the *New York Times* are inflated (Caldwell, 1996). However, figures provided by Downs (1995) are consistent with those used by the *Times* and it is undisputed that large numbers of jobs have been eliminated by American corporations during the time period studied by the *Times*. The actual number is irrelevant to our discussion here.

[4] Boeing's communication strategy met most, if not all, of the objectives identified as necessary for ethical organizational communication by Stevenson (1992, 181):

1. Commit to active, comprehensive employee communications now – not just when it is necessary; 2. Develop real-time communications with employees; 3. Seek to communicate with employees at home as well as the workplace; 4. Learn to confront, deal with, and use the employee grapevine; 5. Be forthright, open, and honest in talking with employees; 6. Provide feedback mechanisms so that employee communications are as efficient and effective up through the organization as they are top-down; 7. Form a business partnership with employees; 8. Use the human resources processes as part of the employee communication effort; 9. Give incentive to employee communication, making every manager responsible and accountable for employee communication; 10. Commit the talent and resources necessary to get the employee communications job done, not just in good times, but also when it is difficult and uncomfortable.

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LEARNING TO BE A JOURNALIST: A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF CYBORGS, COLLEGE NEWSWORKERS AND RSI WORK CULTURE

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LEARNING TO BE A JOURNALIST: A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF CYBORGS, COLLEGE NEWSWORKERS AND RSI WORK CULTURE

In August 1993, while I was a copy editor at the Austin American-Statesman, we had a seminar on repetitive strain injuries (RSI)[1] given by Chris Foran, an occupational therapist. According to a 1991 Columbia Journalism Review article, RSI has ranked as the country's leading occupational illness since 1987 (Hembree & Sandoval, p. 41) - this seminar was one effort by the Statesman management to deal with the epidemic of RSI in our newsroom. At one point, Michelle Rice, the news editor and my boss, asked Foran, "So, how much pain is normal when you're working?" The question may seem silly now out of context, but so many people in the room had been thinking the same thing. Foran replied, "Pain is not normal!" and went on to discuss pain as an indicator of damage - a sign that should be taken seriously and acted on immediately.

Occupational injuries such as RSI are a blunt reminder of the *physical* consequences of labor and why many journalists, as media scholar Hanno Hardt (1995) puts it, are "casualties of industrialization and technological change" (p. 4). This idea that pain might be normal for journalists raises the issue of what constitutes "normal" journalistic work practices and values. A feminist disability perspective on journalists and occupational health offers an explanation for why Rice asked that question and why U.S. workers, such as journalists, are alienated from their bodies and not conscious of their computer-related work as *actual labor*.

The rise of RSI in the past decade (and my own experience of contracting RSI from newspaper work) raises the question of what journalists' working conditions have been throughout history, how journalists have viewed these conditions, and how they have acted - or not acted - to protect themselves from harm. It is crucial, according to Hardt, to locate journalists "in their relationship to others in the workplace and in society, and ... provide them with a strong sense of their own history and their own place in the making of

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[1] Dr. Emil Pascarelli and journalist Deborah Quilter (1994) write that RSI, also called Cumulative Trauma Disorder or CTD, is caused by a number of factors in today's workplace: repetitive duties, forced work pace, strained, static postures (such as sitting for eight hours at a computer, or standing at an assembly line) and a "deconditioned" workforce (meaning workers who are not initially physically fit).

American culture. Such efforts may ultimately serve the interests of labor and the needs of the working class to rediscover its own history and understand its current situation" (p. 2).

This paper is an initial effort to explore and integrate feminist and cultural theories of a preliminary ethnographic study I conducted in October and November 1996 of the college newsworkers at the Daily Iowan, the campus paper at the University of Iowa. By observing at the DI, I hoped to gain insights into how these college newsworkers were beginning to be socialized into the American journalistic work culture in terms of viewing (or not viewing!) their bodies in relation to their work. I begin by exploring writings by disability feminists, Emily Martin (a feminist medical anthropologist), and feminist cybertheorist notions of controlling the body - with consideration of the cyborg as a theoretical concept related to my work. I will situate this discussion and my ethnographic project within American journalistic work culture as part of the contemporary American work culture. I loosely define "work culture" as a negotiated, context-sensitive set of practices and beliefs surrounding work. I refer to American journalistic work culture and contemporary American work culture as "RSI work culture" because I believe cultural factors are clearly implicated as causes of RSI and other occupational injuries.[2] Lastly, I will attempt to situate the college newsworkers at the Daily Iowan within this feminist perspective on American journalistic work culture.

Considering that RSI is a disability caused by overwork, I believe there is a need to understand the cultural factors that have caused its onset and prominence at this point in our cultural work history. By examining the college newsroom in particular, I hope to begin to explain why journalists keep signing up for an occupation that could permanently disable them through RSI. I also hope this work will contribute to including a much needed feminist disability perspective in media research on newsworkers and occupational health (i.e., Marston, 1997), as well as adding to studies of student journalists.

These factors all strain muscles and tendons, causing microscopic tears in tendons and injuring muscles, which decreases range of motion, causes pain and can lead to permanent soft tissue and nerve damage.

[2] I sometimes also refer to "RSI work culture" in another sense: The existence of RSI in the newsroom and other workplaces creates a culture of disability identity surrounding RSI. This work focuses on the first notion of RSI work culture. I hope to focus on the latter in subsequent research.

Feminist theory, embodiment, and technology[3]

There are no "minds" floating around, disconnected from their "bodies" - an interconnectedness that feminism continually reminds us of.[4] Nancy Hartsock (1983) in her arguments for a feminist materialism argues for this the notion of grounding our theory in material reality. A concept of Hartsock's that I find particularly relevant in regard to disability, such as RSI, is her reminder of "the bodily aspect of existence. ... There is some biological, bodily component to human existence" (p. 289). She reminds us that, as "embodied humans, we are of course inextricably both natural and social" (p. 283-284). While Hartsock is speaking specifically about the Marxian category of labor, her emphasis on the interaction between the social and the "natural" is also important for feminist scholars to remember when dealing with disability perspectives.

Feminist disability theorist Susan Wendell (1996) delineates how disability is socially constructed in our society.[5] She argues that there are literal physical social conditions that affect peoples bodies, damaging them: such as, wars, disease, crime (including rape), high-risk working conditions, and contamination of the environment. The increased pace of life is also a creator of disability in our society, according to Wendell. This pace is taken for granted by nondisabled people, but actually causes disabilities (such as RSI and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder).[6]

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[3] As disability scholars Mitchell and Snyder (1997) point out, there has been a great deal of current academic interest in "the body" (i.e. Terry and Urla, 1995; Jacobus, Keller, & Shuttleworth, 1990). I realize that this particular phrasing probably arose to prevent universalizing about our bodies by separating them out as a theoretical conception that is grounded in cultural and historical contexts. However, I find this particular phrasing objectifying and guilty of separation from our diverse lived bodily realities (as does Mairs, 1996). Thus, I will endeavor to avoid this practice.

[4] The critique of dualistic thinking, particularly the separation between body and mind, is a hallmark of feminism. Feminists such as anthropologist Sherry Ortner (1974) have shown that women are usually aligned with their bodies and nature, which are both devalued compared to the conceptual alliance of men to their minds and culture.

[5] Wendell (1989) emphasizes her belief "that disability is socially constructed from biological reality" (p. 107). Feminist disability scholar Rosemarie Thomson (1997) also agrees with this culturally situated definition of disability. Thomson writes that disability is a "representation" of how bodies are interpreted and compared in our culture. She, like Wendell, believes that this definitional process results in value judgments: "Disability... is the attribution of corporeal deviance - not so much a property of bodies as a product of cultural roles about what bodies should be or do" (p. 6).

[6] In fact, only 15 percent of persons with disabilities are born with their disabilities (Shapiro, 1994, p. 7). Despite the commonality of disability in our culture - figures range from 35 million to 120 million persons in America with disabilities, depending on the definition used - persons with disabilities are still treated like the minority (Shapiro, 1994).

Thomson further argues that the "normate," our mythic ideal of what is normal, must create cultural Others to define itself against. Much of the recent scholarly interest in "the body" has endeavored to reveal this historically and contextually sensitive conception of the normal being defined against what is seen as deviant in race, gender, able-bodiedness, sexual orientation, etc. (for example, Terry & Urla, 1995; Jacobus, Keller, & Shuttleworth, 1990). Thomson writes that there are many parallels between the social meanings attributed to female bodies and disabled bodies in relation to this norm of interest to feminist scholars. Thomson argues for a feminist theory that includes multiple axes of identity and uses what queer theorist Eve Sedgwick calls a "universalizing" view of difference that enables many cross-cutting groups to coalesce around disability concerns (as opposed to a "minoritizing" view which would make disability into the concern of only a narrow group).

Wendell argues that the oppression of people with disabilities comes from the lack of room in our cultural space for real, feeling bodies. Most able-bodied people "do not want to know about suffering caused by the body" (1989, p. 111), because they fear it. So, it is a way that everyone can further distance themselves from the reality of the bodies they live in. Disability, according to Thomson, subverts the liberal American ideal that everyone can become a master of destiny and self (p. 41). "The disabled body stands for the self gone out of control, individualism run rampant" (Thomson, p. 43).

This idealizing of and alienation from the body comes from a desire to control the body, something that feminist theorists have analyzed in respect to our patriarchal culture. "Idealizing the body and wanting to control it go hand-in hand; it is impossible to say whether one causes the other" (Wendell, 1989, p. 113). Feminist medical anthropologist Emily Martin (1994) explores the concept of immunity in American culture - from polio in the 1950s to HIV in the 1990s - via examining media content and scientific studies and conducting ethnographic research. She finds that we are increasingly pressured to alienate ourselves from our bodies by thinking of them as "flexible" in health and work practices.[7]

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[7] Martin (1992) finds in another ethnography, specifically exploring women and medical texts, that women in particular are increasingly alienated from their bodies in the medical system's negative labeling of natural body functions such as menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. This alienation, Martin argues, also comes from the control the medical system attempts to exert over women in the birth process.

Western medicine also plays into this myth that the body can be controlled by directing research and medical care "toward [more] life-threatening conditions than toward chronic illnesses and disabilities. Even pain was relatively neglected as a medical problem until the second half of this century" (Wendell, 1989, p. 114). The person with a disability, who cannot be simply "cured" within this system, is seen as abnormal and even at fault for their disability. Ignoring the perspectives of people with disabilities also fosters unrealistic notions of our bodies' limits and abilities. In this case, when we make people with disabilities the "other," we are "othering" our own bodies, as well. RSI, of course, is disability that cannot merely be "cured" after-the-fact; it has been caused by unrealistic ideas about what is an appropriate amount of work. However, RSI is also a disability caused from an interaction with technology - and technology has often been hailed as liberatory and reviled as evil.

Feminist cybertheorist Anne Balsamo (1996) warns against analyses of technology that are merely determinist, and argues that technology is not necessarily a tool of power elites. The technologies themselves, she argues, "have *limited* agency" (p. 123). What is crucial in analyses of technology, according to Balsamo, is to examine though ways technologies and their uses are determined by broader cultural and social forces.

Exploring feminist cybertheory[8]

> It is not a coincidence that VR emerges in the 1980s, during a time when the body is understood to be increasingly vulnerable (literally, as well as discursively) to infection as well as to gender, race, ethnicity, and ability critiques. ... The critical point here is that these new technological applications... do not create disembodied citizens. Rather, they are themselves consequences of social changes already in place (Balsamo, p. 127).

Sheryl Hamilton (1996) writes that cybertheorists attempt to examine the interaction between human bodies and machines. She believes that feminist cybertheorists have not strayed too far from Donna Haraway's original feminist formulation of the cyborg from about 10 years ago. Haraway (1989) defines a cyborg as "a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (p. 174). She believes we are all cyborgs, under this definition, at this period in history, because U.S. scientific culture has breached all dualistic boundaries - specifically those boundaries between human and animal; organism and machine; and between physical and non-physical (p. 176-177).

Hamilton outlines 3 different ways the cyborg is used in feminist cybertheory: as metaphor, dreamlike fantasy, and / or literal being:

> I suggests that the cyborg is most richly cast as all three. Some feminist cybertheorists accept the cyborg as metaphor, often for postmodern subjectivity; some consider the cultural representation of the cyborg and the fantasies [usually masculine] those representations embody; and yet other work considers the potential of real cyborgs, of the fusion of body and machine through communication and information technologies (p. 14).

Hamilton says the latter category, cyborg as literal being, is the least explored - with speculation that cyberspace, the Internet, and virtual reality are making our bodies irrelevant (p. 20). Balsamo discusses "the body on the electronic frontier," with technology such as the computer, I would argue, as the covered wagon of this frontier. However, Balsamo doesn't problematize this particular American, progressive metaphor of the frontier as colonial conquest and the computer as an agent of colonization, erasing our bodies.[9] Balsamo does go on to reveal the virtual reality industry's tactics of painting VR as a way to "experience it live" (p. 120), but without the "excess baggage" of our bodies - since VR technology provides experience "through an internalized technological gaze" (p. 125).

Balsamo finds this supposed "body-free environment," which claims to be free from gender and race (and, I would add, dis/ability), to be very gender biased. After her VR experience, Balsamo "discovered that this *conceptual* denial of the body is accomplished through the *material* repression of the physical body" (p. 123). I believe that Haraway would agree with Balsamo that unpacking whoever "controls the interpretation of bodily boundaries" is a feminist issue (Haraway, p. 193).

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[8] I'd like to thank Mia Consalvo for raising my awareness about feminist cybertheory through sharing materials, through conversations, and by encouraging me to reread Donna Haraway.

[9] I'd like to thank Laura Donaldson for alerting me to this problem, and her elegant wording of this colonizing aspect of the frontier metaphor.

Hamilton says the primacy of technology and cultural processes in this coupling of the "literal cyborg" are not problematized. I would agree and disagree. Haraway seems more intrigued with the cyborg as "political metaphor" notion, while I believe Balsamo truly grapples with the literal cyborg in her discussion of VR.[10]

Disability scholars David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder (1997) argue that most of the recent scholarship on "the body" has ignored a disability perspective. Literature and these studies of "the body," in fact, only recognize disability as a metaphor for "nearly every social conflict outside of its own ignoble predicament in culture" (p. 12). Mitchell and Snyder critique postmodern theory and cybertheory for merely using disability in relation to technology:

> without comment on the conflictual relationship of disabled people to the equipment that theoretically affords them access to able-bodied populations, architectural structures, and cultural commodities. Nor is there any serious effort to specify the nature of this usage within disabled communities themselves (p. 8).

Mitchell and Snyder specifically implicate the metaphor of prosthetic identification used in cybertheory. This metaphor suggests that able-bodied users of technology are functioning like persons with disabilities who use assistive technology or prosthetics. Disability is also used as a metaphor in Rosanne Stone's (1992, as cited in Crary & Kwinter) suggestion that having alternative identities in cyberspace is comparable to having Multiple Personality Disorder - a comparison that is demeaning and ignores the lived reality of MPD, as well as the fact that persons with MPD do not choose to have multiple personalities.[11]

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[10] I am referring to Haraway's celebration of "women of color" as a transgressive cyborg identity by occupying contradictory locations to complicate identity (p. 180). I tend to agree with Joan Scott (1989) that the example of "women of color" and their oppositional reading as exemplary cyborg politics is problematic, bordering on romanticism and essentialism (p. 217). Haraway also cites Chela Sandoval's notion of political identity through coalition/affinity, creating "oppositional consciousness" (Haraway, p. 180). The idea of the cyborg as a metaphor for postmodern subjectivity is interesting. In fact, Rosemarie Thompson herself uses this metaphor to describe the "confused boundaries" people with disabilities experience. However useful this metaphor may be in conceptualizing postmodern subjectivity, I refuse to erase the boundary between technology and the body when it comes to work and occupational injury such as RSI.

[11] Again, I thank Mia Consalvo for sharing Stone's metaphor and the cite in our Feminist Cultural Studies class in Spring 1996.

When feminist cybertheory becomes more grounded in experience (as Balsamo suggests with her VR experience), and moves beyond theoretical abstractions, I believe it becomes more clear that we cannot uncritically use disability as a metaphor for embodiment in cyberspace. Nor can we literally fuse bodies with machines in every case in some sort of liberatory celebration of cyborgs. Following Balsamo's more cautious cybertheory approach, I believe RSI is a painful and jolting reminder of the physical consequences of the cyborg - of ignoring the body in performing repetitive tasks such as keyboarding on the Internet and on deadline at work (or performing any repetitive assembly-line work). To add to Wendell and Thompson, RSI as a disability is a biological reality being caused by social constructions about what the limits of a "normal" body is.[12]

Journalism and American work culture

> Work is being redefined as both literally female and feminized, whether performed by men or women. To be feminized means to be made extremely vulnerable; able to be disassembled, re-assembled, exploited as a reserve labor force; seen less as workers than as servers; subjected to time arrangements on and off the paid job that make a mockery of a limited work day... (Haraway, p. 190).

I will begin this section by exploring Juliet Schor's (1992) discussion of U.S. work culture. Then I will briefly discuss the journalistic work culture (professional and academic) by focusing on ideas from Hanno Hardt. Lastly, I'll weave in a discussions of RSI flowing from the "internalized technological" gaze inherent in U.S. and journalistic work practices.

Harvard economics professor Juliet Schor (1992) argues that American workers are working nearly a month more per year with less time off than they were 40 years ago. She notes that most researchers believe work is declining in the United States. Those researchers, she writes, extol the American notion of progress - believing our lives are better than before and that American workers are experiencing better working conditions because of technology. Schor herself warns about considering the context of technology, since it can harness humans, as well as free them (p. 6). She believes potentially liberating technology unfortunately has arrived in a context of powerful economic incentives to maintain long working hours.

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[12] Although I'm not sure how to gracefully weave this in, I believe we cannot discuss issues of uses of technology without exploring the conditions of production of that technology. Haraway reminds us that what she calls the "New Industrial Revolution" is producing a new working class, especially because "women in third world countries are the preferred labor force for the science-based multinationals in the export-processing sectors, particularly in electronics" (p. 190). These workers themselves are at risk for RSI from the repetitive work tasks and long hours involved in their jobs.

Schor challenges those experts who say work has decreased from the medieval era before the market system.[13] She points out that the medieval laborer who allegedly toiled from sun-up to sundown actually worked a very intermittent schedule, with many rest and food breaks throughout the day and holidays throughout the year. Schor argues that capitalism created strong incentives for employers to keep hours long. These incentives began with a fixed wage that did not vary with hours, which reappeared in twentieth century as the fixed annual salary (the main reason for white-collar workers' long hours). "Other incentives also came into play by the end of the nineteenth century, such as employers desires to keep machinery operating continuously, and the beneficial effects of long hours on workplace discipline (p. 48). Factories, and the use of artificial lighting, allowed the working day to stretch into the night (p. 50). "By the nineteenth century, the English agricultural laborer was working six days per week, with only Good Friday and Christmas as official time off" (p. 51).

Two work trends around the turn of the century aimed to increase work pace and further control workers - Taylorism and Fordism - trends that I see as grandfathers of the RSI work culture. According to Schor, Frederick Winslow Taylor's "scientific management" aimed to eliminate the conflict between capital and labor, by paying strictly on the basis of actual work done. The setting of rates was allegedly made "scientific" to insulate them from conflict, by using time-and-motion studies to determine the pace (or "standard times") of individual tasks.[14] "Piece rates were then calculated on the basis of these standards" (Schor, p. 58). This strategy, however, didn't eliminate conflict, because the "process of discovering standard times became a game of cunning between the operative and the man with the stopwatch" where workers would add extra movements to resist being held to a certain standard time (Schor, p. 58-59). This process intentionally disassociated/alienated the labor process from the skills of workers, as well as increased the pace of work.

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[13] Schor remarks that her data on the medieval laborer comes from England, since there is no medieval equivalent for the U.S. worker.

[14] Practices such as Taylorism are what Michel Foucault (1995) would refer to as "disciplines of normality" meant to control workers' bodies. Media and sociology scholar Stuart Ewen (1988) calls Taylor a "pioneer" in the "attack on the human subject" for this managerial strategy of " systemic

With the increase in mechanization came an incentive for employers to make sure they hired fewer workers and kept current skilled workers working longer hours: "Once capital is invested, its owner has strong financial incentives to see that it used as extensively as possible" (Schor, p. 59-60). In 1914, Henry Ford created the moving conveyor belt, which gave management more control over work pace. . Workers resisted, so Ford instituted an employment rent of a $5-day, which Schor calls "a sophisticated economic incentive." Employment rents were successful in making repetitious, low-paying jobs valuable to workers. "At Ford, observers described the men as 'absolutely docile' after the 5-dollar day came in," Schor writes (p. 59-62).

Schor shows that work has increased for all workers, across all categories and occupations. The most visible group is women, who are coping with a double load of overwork in the household and overwork at their jobs (p. 20).[15] The introduction of work technologies often affects marginalized groups such as women first, but the damage caused by these technologies is ignored specifically because of assumptions about women - or from just ignoring women. Messing, Neis, and Dumais (1995) argue that women's occupational health problems become quite severe because they usually have to exist for quite some time and gain enormous numbers (and transfer to male workers) before women are heard. They say women were originally blamed for problems with the introduction of VDTs. In fact, they argue, women paid the price for lack of research into possible health problems from VDTs and the lack of workers' voices in implementing this technology -

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observation of human behavior in the workplace, and the subsequent standardization of behavior in order to control the workforce more effectively" (p. 80).

[15] Schor notes that this rising workload has physical and social consequences, including: stress, stress-related diseases (especially among women), more workers comp claims for stress, sleep deficits, no quality time for families (especially problem for women), and strain on marriages (p. 11-12).

women suffered from miscarriages and still suffer from musculoskeletal problems such as RSI.[16]

However, Schor illuminates a possibly more disturbing trend: that overwork is beginning with teenagers. Teens are working longer hours than ever before. "In middle-class homes, much of this work is motivated by consumerism: teenagers buy clothes, music, even cars" (p. 26). Teens are working full-time in addition to full-time school. "Teachers report that students are falling asleep in class, getting lower grades, and cannot pursue after-school activities" (p. 27). So, it would seem that Americans are being socialized, at a young age, into a culture that celebrates overwork at the expense of health, relationships, and leisure.

Schor argues that employers can now ask for more and more, with the lure of the carrot (income) and the fear of dismissal. However, there is a price to pay for working long hours at a forced pace. Schor writes that studies in even the early twentieth century showed worker fatigue impairing efficiency and their ability to function off the job. "If the demands of work are too great, productivity sufferers, because people are just not capable of maintaining the pace" (p. 65). There are physical limits to what humans can do. Unfortunately, workers are encouraged to push those limits, suggesting that work itself by definition has become harmful since industrialization. Journalistic work certainly is no exception.

Journalistic work culture

As Hardt (1990), Smith & Dyer (1992), and Hardt and Brennen (1995) have noted, traditional media histories have ignored individual rank-and-file newsworkers and their working conditions. These histories, instead, are "biographies of power" that detail the institutional power of news organizations and of star reporters and editors. These histories assume that what is important about newspapers, for example, is their circulation and technologies. The effects of these technologies on newsworkers is ignored. An occupational health perspective demands that the history of newsworkers themselves be uncovered. Because technology itself has become so internalized in the practice of journalism, a history of newsworkers and their working conditions by necessity must include a discussion of technology (i.e. Hardt, 1990).[17] Scholars in the Hardt and Brennen (1995) anthology and Ted Curtis Smythe (1992), begin to trace the introduction of industrial technologies into the newsroom around the turn of the century and how this negatively affected working conditions, job tasks, pay, professionalism and divisions between newsroom and composing staff, the public service ethos, and specialized training of newsworkers (i.e., Salcetti, 1995; Solomon, 1995).

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[16] Balka (1995), for example, shows that the introduction of new technology decreased the decision latitude and increased work pace and work demand for women telephone operators in Newfoundland -

Salcetti (1995) specifically examines a historical turning point in the mechanization of the newsroom around the 1880s - when she believes newspapers hit their mechanical stride. The introduction of the telegraph, the typewriter, and the telephone increased expectations of speed and productivity for newsworkers. It actually changed the nature of certain job tasks. For example, reporters became mere news gatherers (not writers) who called in their stories to rewrite staff who did the actual writing, often affecting the accuracy of the work. This is merely one example of a division of labor, a compartmentalizing of newswork. Reporters thus became an expendable, entry-level position.

This technology affected the actual working conditions and job tasks, but it also became a means to place different monetary values on different newswork. Reporters were paid poorly compared to editors (Salcetti; Smythe, 1992; Solomon, 1995). Solomon argues that this same time period saw the rise of a commercial model of journalism, where profit became the focus. He, like Salcetti, focuses on how the introduction of technology caused an increase in the specialization and division of labor. One of his examples is "the descent of the copy editor" as copy editing tasks became divorced from creativity - to

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increasing occupational stress.

[17] Hardt (1990) argues that most of the writing on communication and technology "has been preoccupied either with how current industrial concerns can be accommodated or with how media technology affects audiences as consumers" (p. 346). These writings, along with media histories, according to Hardt, glorify power and technology while ignoring the working conditions of rank-and-file journalists. For example, the well-used Emery and Emery (1992) media history text's only remarks on actual working conditions refers to city rooms where editors: "often feared for their jobs and many reporters toiled 14 to 16 hours per day to earn, perhaps, $20 to $30 per week, instead of a regular salary, under a degrading time and space system" (p. 179). Emery and Emery add that pressure was kept on low-ranking reporters by "instituting spy systems and keeping benefits to a minimum" (p. 179). The rest of the book delineates a progressive history of journalism based on technological development.

merely include repetitive, boring drudgery that was not valued. The creation of the copy editor and reporter also created a division of labor that was somewhat confrontational since, by definition, copy editors edited reporters' work. Solomon speculates that this is one of many factors preventing solidarity in the newsroom.

Journalists worked under a forced pace, with little pay, with long hours, and no time for social life. Brennen (1995), in her study of novels written by and about journalists, 1919-1938, details more closely some of the particulars of newsroom working conditions. Brennen sees these novels as a valid source of information about the real working conditions, following Raymond Williams' notions of cultural materialism; she doesn't blindly accept their portrayals, but situates them as realist novels. Newsrooms in the novels were dirty, noisy, and stressful. The newsworkers within might work 24 hours, without sleep and without a decent meal. Newswork was portrayed as for the young. Those who stuck with it longer, she writes, are portrayed as suffering from early death from overwork, alcoholism, drug abuse, and insanity. The novels also include examples of reporters being socialized into suppressing the news - and facing discipline (including firing) for not following the rules. Although she mentions the alienation and demoralization caused by this, she doesn't specifically mention the novels portraying other effects on the newsworkers' health.

The dogged commitment of journalists to such seemingly grueling work is complex and requires a consideration of what Hardt calls the tension between lofty ideals and exploitation.[18] First of all, newsworkers are easily called into work because of their public service ethos: a First Amendment mandate that allows news organizations to hide their profit-seeking and exploitation of newsworkers under the guise of informing the public (i.e., Salcetti; Solomon). Under the public service ethos, even if workers are unionized, they may not find themselves able to strike because they'd see themselves as betraying the public.

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[18] Concerns about the professional status, working conditions, and salaries of journalists hold from the past to the present. Journalists' salaries are notoriously low, while they still work long and odd hours (evenings and weekends) - the turnover rate for journalists is high. So, what keeps bringing more journalists in? Dorfman (1985) argues that "journalism hangs on to some mystique of whitewashing Aunt Polly's fence: it looks like so much fun it appears almost sinful to want to get paid for doing it" (p. 25). I

The desire of newsworkers to see themselves as professionals also plays a major role. Solomon argues that as the commercial model of journalism became prevalent, newspapers themselves became a high-capital expenditure - meaning that publishers began to come from a much higher class background than newsworkers. Hardt (1990) adds that the addition of technology affected this ideology of professionalism by creating another specialization/division of labor: between what was seen as the intellectual labor of newsroom workers and the manual labor of the composing room workers. Once newsroom workers began to ally themselves with white-collar interests, unionization seemed too blue collar. Publishers, by creating such organizations as the ANPA, also began fighting attempts at unionization, fearing any loss of control over workers. This exercise of control helps explain the anti-labor bias of newspapers. Ironically, as Solomon points out, newsworkers such as reporters became expendable, with no bargaining power, while typesetters with needed, specialized skills unionized and had more bargaining power and better working conditions. This suggests that newsworkers historically are actually more "blue collar" in salary and working conditions than they'd like to believe.

Lastly, with this increase in specialization, Salcetti argues that journalism programs began to reflect the need for specialized training. The conferring of degrees created another class division in the newsroom, between those without degrees and those from higher socioeconomic background who did have degrees. Journalism schools struggled with (and still do) whether to function like trade schools, that serve the interests of publishers seeking workers, or to model other professional schools, which would "serve" civilization with journalists educated in a broad liberal arts tradition. By excluding composing room work, journalists only needed to be taught certain skills. Hardt (1990) critiques journalism programs as lacking self-criticism and any criticism of the media because of the close ties between journalism schools and the news industry. He argues that journalism historians have had to work within this restricted environment that fosters elitist media histories.[19]

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believe this journalistic "mystique" helps explain why newsworkers continue to labor for long hours and further suggests why studying the perspectives of newsworkers themselves is important.

[19] Hardt situates media histories within the practices of journalism faculty in the academy who, as former journalists, reflect the journalistic ideology of "objectivity" and "admiration of free enterprise" in the

Hardt urges a focus on the histories of rank-and-file journalists and their working conditions as a necessity for creating a collective history and sense of struggle, and to better inform college journalists about the realities of the workplace they will be entering. Without such a focus on working conditions and the occupational injuries related to these conditions, I would agree that it seems that journalists are uncritically educated and socialized into ideals of public service and professionalism that hide the less savory and even physically dangerous realities of the journalistic workplace.

RSI work culture

> Thus, the moral generosity that seeks to compensate for physical differences makes cultural outcasts of its recipients by assuming that individual bodies must conform to institutional standards, rather than restructuring the social environment to accommodate physical variety (Thomson, p. 51).

Thomson, above, remarks on how persons with disabilities have been excluded from the workforce under the guise of moral generosity from a Puritan and classical liberal standpoint - but it seems clear that even "able" bodies are expected to conform to certain work standards, instead of vice versa. This inability to integrate the complex, physical realities of work and our bodies has helped foster, I believe, the current epidemic of disability from work itself – occupational injuries such as repetitive strain injuries (RSI) in computer workplaces. The research analysis of RSI and other occupational injuries should focus on more than accommodation after-the-fact. Because occupational injuries are preventable, the focus should be studying the complex cultural causes of RSI and advocating prevention through changing the organization of work tasks and required work hours and days.

Repetitive stress injuries are not a new phenomenon, according to Wolkomir (1994). He says that in 1713, scribes suffered from writer's cramp. However, "[w]ith

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portrayal of the American press system as consisting of mainly successful institutions and leaders. Hardt further argues that American press historians and journalism are vulnerable to criticism from the journalism industry because of this cyclical relationship between journalism industry and academia. I agree with him that the pressure in U.S. journalism programs to train what Lafky (1993) might call "ideologically reliable" journalists is considerable and has resulted in "lack of constructive media criticism (and even of the teaching of critical skills); [and] ... increasing dependence upon external support (often from national media industries)" (Hardt, 1990, p. 357).

industrialization, which demanded ceaseless iterations of precise arm and hand motions, strain injuries proliferated. Mostly, the crippled workers suffered silently" (p. 90). The assembly-line nature of industrial work has been affecting "blue collar" workers for some time. It's only within the last 10 years or so that we've even heard of repetitive stress injuries, because of the introduction of the computer to the "white collar" workplace - clearly a workplace that affects more middle- to upper-class workers.[20]

Occupational health statistics and studies on journalists are difficult to come by.[21] The best examples currently are anecdotal. For example, Jill Rackmill, who moved quickly through the ranks at "Dateline NBC" from intern to associate producer, first experienced RSI pain when she was 21 from her newswork. However, she says ignored it, because "journalism is a culture where you work through pain" (Burkitt, 1996) - a clear example of how pain is "normal" in journalistic work and how journalists are alienated from their bodies in a work culture that fosters RSI. Like journalists, the proliferation of computers in universities has created a RSI problem for faculty and students who use them to write, e-mail, and explore sources on the Internet (Rimer, 1997).

A contemporary occupational health perspective on newsworkers needs to take their history into consideration and the societal context of work in the United States into consideration. Newsworkers today are not immune from part-time, temporary, and shift work and increases in work hours caused by capital accumulation strategies dating back to the 1880s (Solomon, 1995), along with increases in occupational illnesses from technology such as RSI (Foreman & Swanson, 1995; Hembree & Sandoval, 1991). Major newsrooms saw their first cases of RSI in the mid-1980s with the increased use of computers in the newsroom (i.e. the Los Angeles Times and Newsday). Hembree and Sandoval blame musculoskeletal injuries such as RSI partly on the "overwork ethic" and "macho" newsroom management attitudes towards work. Foreman and Swanson argue that two other major technological innovations around computers have increased musculoskeletal injuries such as RSI: pagination and the mouse. Pagination has made trips to the composing room obsolete, meaning newsroom workers can continually type in the newsroom. Pascarelli says the mouse inherently causes strain because of the grip necessary to use it.[22]

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[20] Barbara Zang (1991), in her research on carpal tunnel syndrome coverage and medical studies, found that RSI studies originally showed that women were more likely than men to get RSI - pointing to women's smaller wrists and hands as a factor. However, she found that more recent studies clarified this difference: women are more likely to be in lower-paying, lower level positions that require more repetitive work (whether clerical, assembly-line, etc.). When men are in the same positions, they have the same incidence of RSI. Zang's study reveals a gender bias in medical research, on top of the gender bias constructed in the structure of the workplace.

[21] My initial efforts to track down occupational health statistics on journalists has been somewhat unsuccessful. A call to the Newspaper Guild it found that their number had been changed, but no one answered at the new number. I left a message for the communication director at SPJ which was never returned. I did speak with Craig Branson, the publication director at ASNE who informed me he didn't think there was any way I'd find such statistics, because they hadn't been compiled. He said that he believed it would especially be impossible to track down substance abuse statistics because they are covered under company health insurance and not made public. This self-reported nature of work-related illnesses and injuries suggests a problem with the accuracy of any statistic I find. However, I will continue my efforts to obtain this information. The most recent RSI statistics I have from the Bureau Of Labor Statistics shows that the top two industries with the highest number of RSI disorders in 1994 were the motor vehicles and equipment industry, with 52,500 cases, and the meat products industry, with 40,200 cases. Newspapers, by contrast, are 32nd on that list, with 2,300 cases. RSI affects more than 700,000 workers a year and accounts for $1 of every $3 spent on workers compensation, according to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration ("OSHA scales back...," 1995). However, studies show that RSIs are under- reported (Hembree & Sandoval, 1991).

I've focused mainly on occupational health problems such as RSI that are musculoskeletal injuries from technology and overwork for newsworkers. However, these are not the only contemporary issues. Cook, Banks and Thompson (1995) and Thompson, Fernback and Heider (1993) have studied occupational stress in newsworkers. Cook, Banks and Thompson surveyed full-time copy editors at 15 daily papers and found that supervisor leadership style and personal hardiness are related to job stress and health problems in the copy editors. Forty percent of their sample was planning to leave journalism. One of the stress factors was the changing expectations of technical skills for copy editors, especially related to design (such as pagination), and the lack of training for these new expected skills related to new technology. Thompson, Fernback and Heider performed a limited case study of a newspaper in Colorado and found that management style and demands affected occupational stress more than deadline work. The workers involved described a transient management culture that insisted on making its mark on workers while making them feel devalued. Despite this stress, workers found comfort in camaraderie, creating a family-like atmosphere through support and banter. While these studies represent a beginning attempt to capture an occupational health perspective on journalists, neither one represents an in-depth effort to capture newsworkers' perspectives on their own working conditions.[23]

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[22] Foreman and Swanson, and Hembree and Sandoval argue that management attitude is important. Many newsworker RSI cases have been contested. However, the Los Angeles Times created a "RSI room" for workers to rest in and exercise in. Retraining typing techniques is also a step taken. Newsworkers who already have RSI may use voice computers, but voice computers are not a panacea because they are slow.

Biographical and autobiographical works highlight these occupational health problems, along with more specific accounts of strain from racial and gender discrimination. Nan Robertson's (1992) biographical study of women newsworkers at the New York Times uncovers countless incidents of discrimination. However, she also details a history of the paper's occupational health problems, ranging from depression and melancholia, to alcoholism, suicide, and heart attacks. Robertson herself admits suffering from severe depression and alcoholism after the death of her husband. Jill Nelson (1993), an African-American writer formerly working for the Washington Post, discusses the racism and sexism she fought there - as well as her own drinking and overwork habits. As she asserted her voice more in her writing and became more active in the union, she was disciplined indirectly through reassignment and by having her stories buried. Finally, Nelson suffers an emotional breakdown, unable to even leave bed because she is so depressed and demoralized.

I've suggested, from a feminist disability perspective, that disability is socially constructed from biological reality. Occupational injuries themselves are biological realities caused by societal constructions about ability that don't consider the limits of workers' bodies. The history of newsworkers suggests that difficult working conditions have been held in tension with lofty ideals of professionalism and public service. Nelson's in-depth account provides us with an answer to the question of what the real toll of dealing with management control over workers and discrimination is, suggesting that newsworkers themselves provide the best perspective on their working conditions.

Pascarelli adds that if work organization is not changed to ensure different work tasks, then voice computers will cause vocal cord strain (he's already seeing this in his RSI clinic).

[23] The survey only covered full-time copy editors from 15 daily newspapers. The participant-observation study only involved two 1-2 hour field visits, focusing on only six copy editors.

College newsworkers and their bodies learn journalistic work[24]

> *Now here's* a big *secret: The past two days, we DI staffers have been straddling one of the biggest polarizations of our lives - one leg basking in the warm rush of journalistic ecstasy, the other standing knee-deep in missed assignments* (Wilbur, 1996).

So, how do these cultural factors contributing to alienation of the body in our RSI work culture play out? Hamilton points out that a "frequent criticism leveled against recent feminist cultural analysis is its distance from the field - from actual grass-roots practices, social institutions, and social relations" (p. 22). This is a reminder of the value of doing actual fieldwork to ground the theory used to unpack these processes and the perspectives of persons involved with this technology in our work culture.

I focus here (for time and length consideration) specifically on my interviews with my three main informants of my Daily Iowan study: Rima, a biracial woman[25]; Stephanie, a white woman; and Dave, a white man. All three informants are graduating seniors.[26] All are editors, which made them more easily observable in terms of the amount of time they spent in the newsroom. I was acquainted with Dave from a class we took (in Spring 1995) and with Stephanie from social gatherings.[27]

These students are specifically in school to get a degree. However, they are already learning to overwork themselves by combining the DI and school - and learning to value their journalistic work over their schoolwork as more important and practical. Rima is taking 16 hours of class, while working at the DI and working two other jobs. Her classes include a class in international law and a graduate level literature class. Stephanie is taking

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[24] The student journalists cited here all signed informed consent forms and chose their own pseudonyms.

[25] Rima prefers the label "biracial," as someone with a white mother and African American father.

[26] Again, this was a preliminary study conducted in October and November 1996. There has been much debate in anthropology as to what the best techniques are for writing up ethnographic research (i.e. Wolf, 1992; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Behar & Gordon, 1995). I will use the present tense, not to create a timeless ethnographic present, but to remind readers that meanings are continually being constructed and to avoid the awkwardness of past tense. I also continue to use first-person referrals to situate myself as a researcher in this text, revealing my authority in constructing it.

[27] The student journalists at the DI work Sunday through Thursday to put out a morning paper Monday through Friday for the University of Iowa community - a readership of at least 20, 000, according to the DI circulation office. There are 83 student journalists who work at the DI: 45 are men, 38 are women. I observed at the Daily Iowan, from October to November 1996. I'd like to thank William Casey, publisher of the DI, for those statistics.

14 hours of class, and working about 35 hours a week at the DI. Dave is only taking 7 hours of class, but works at the DI about 60-65 hours a week. Along with class and working at the DI Sunday through Thursday, Dave spent most of the fall semester also commuting to the Quad City Times each Friday - leaving Saturday as his only day off - so that he could get "clips" to support his resume.

"Making a difference": The public service ethos

All three of them enjoy working at the DI and enjoy their coworkers. When I ask Stephanie if she likes working at the DI, she says, "Yeah, I do. I love it." Why?

> It's like Lord of the Flies. You take 40 twentysomethings, who have no skills, give them this project, give some of them shields and some of them swords and some of them nothing and watch them fight it out. It's a situation where kids have never worked with their peers before. Or they've never worked in a professional situation, so everything is taken personally. Everything is fodder for gossip. Everything is a potential problem.
>
> Well the amazing part is sometimes we do such good work. And it's completely by accident. Another thing that is really important is that, all of the sudden, you've got 40 or 50 kids in there who've come to journalism, and just get a sense of empowerment from it. They see their work, in the paper, they see people reading it, and they're like, "I am having an impact on the community, where before I was nothing, you know, I was just a cog in the daily workings."

Stephanie feels she's "making a difference," and that's important. She also enjoys and says she's good at "organizing things" - whereas other people are into "the other aspects of journalism."

Dave knows journalism is what he wants to do, whether in newspapers or magazines. "I think, each person has something that they're supposed to be doing, and... this is what I enjoy," he says. "And for me to find something that I'm good at, and that I enjoy, and that I'm receiving recognition for - well, it's a can't-miss prospect for me." Where he is and how much he's making doesn't necessarily matter to Dave - but doing a good job does: "Anywhere I go where I know I'm doing a good job, whether I'm making $12,000 a year or $42,000 a year. ... If I'm doing a good job, and can live, I'm happy, that's all that matters to me." Dave also enjoys the teaching and learning aspect of the student newspaper. "Seeing people learn is my biggest rush," he says.

While Rachel feels combining school and the DI makes her feel like she doesn't "have a life," she does feel "some sort of purpose there that I wouldn't get some just taking classes":

> I'm a person who needs to be able to contribute something. I have a reason to wake up, and classes don't stimulate me that way. I mean, I love reading and I love learning and I do, all the time, even outside of class. But, I'm not stimulated. (laughs) I don't know that I'm really stimulated by the DI. But, in some sense anyway, there's always a place to go after class. And I need that place to go. I mean it plays such a role in my life. Maybe too big a role.

While Dave, Rachel, and Stephanie all say they hang out with their DI colleagues outside of work and school, Stephanie says emphatically that "it's the best part":

> In other jobs that I've had, you know, you'd hang out with your work friends, but not like this. I think there's a sense of "us against the world," but, the world against us at the same time. I mean, when I'm in class, I get shit every day. Every day. I was in class one day We were talking, [a] kid said "Yeah, well, 12 percent of my U-Bill goes to the Daily Iowan through USG funds" Then he goes: "Not by choice!" and, started laughing, and, you know I'm sitting right there. And he knew I worked at the Daily Iowan.

Stephanie says this "sense of solidarity" among DI staff comes from this criticism they experience. She feels that this solidarity might not be there later on as a professional, "because everybody won't be the same age." Stephanie adds that another reason this "solidarity" won't exist later in professional life is because "there will be a hierarchy. But right now, there is no hierarchy." Dave agrees that everyone likes to hang out together, because "a lot of us are just friends" and because "it lets us vent."

The benefits of working at the DI are a sense of purpose in providing information to the community and a voice to readers, a sense of solidarity and fun with coworkers, and a sense of personal education and satisfaction at a job well done. However, Dave illustrates how he already accepts these "non-material" benefits as compensating for poor salary. And Rima hints that perhaps the DI plays too big of a role in her life.

"Yeah we're always starving": The physical consequences

Rima says she gets "very stressed out." Part of this stress, she says, comes from needing to feel like she has "control":

> And I feel such a lack of control in the newsroom. Stories are always falling through, the phone is always ringing, the enormous pile of faxes, the mail, ... having to edit stories ... and keep on top of story ideas ... It just feels like so... much, and it seems I never feel quite in control. And it drives me nuts.

I ask if she feels like she "ought to be able to look calm, cool, and collect all the time" because she's the editor. She does; she puts a great deal of pressure on herself:

I tell Rima that in my fieldnotes, most of the comments made about not eating come from her. "Yeah we're always starving," she says. She adds that she feels tired a lot. Rima is hypoglycemic and says she gets "out of whack" when she doesn't eat. She says she will have surgery, a tonsillectomy, coming up and astounds me by saying, "I can't wait, so I can sleep a lot:

> I mean, I'm honestly looking forward to surgery... I don't eat enough. I don't eat on a regular basis. Part of it is not having any money. And the other part of it is not making time for it. I don't make time for it. I mean I rarely come in the newsroom and leave before I'm done for the day. ... Like, I walked in here at 12 and I haven't left yet. And usually it's like that Sundays. People will go out and get me food. But I won't leave the newsroom.

She won't leave the newsroom, again, because of the pressure she feels. "Well, ... if a story's still out, and it's coming in soon ... I need to be there," she says.

Stephanie feels she gets enough sleep and enough to eat - although she adds: "I don't eat right." However, Stephanie says she makes a point of taking a big lunch for herself:

> Because I need to have two hours a week where I can just sit down with my friend and be like, "what's going on?" ... Thursday night, I'll go out with the DI people and, you know, drink myself silly.

She says she needs the big lunches and the drinking, because "I don't do anything else, but work." She says Dave takes his two-hour lunches for the same reason, "because he needs to." Dave says that his dinner breaks are "my luxury for myself." He feels, "people... don't understand why I do it." He explains that he gets to the DI around noon and works through lunch. So, a long dinner break is necessary. "If anyone has anything to say to me then tough," he laughs. "Because if I don't [take that dinner break], you're gonna see me screaming." While both Dave and Stephanie take time for themselves to eat, I don't see any of them taking this initiative when it comes to their long work hours. And Rima clearly feels that her work situation is out of control - specifically out of *her* ability to control it.

Rima says she doesn't experience any pain from work, but both Stephanie and Dave do. I find myself worrying about them, and lecturing them a little on this topic. Stephanie says she has shoulder problems, from the "terrible chairs at the DI." She also has hand pain from using a mouse for a page design class and the DI:

> C: Are you worried about that at all?
> S: I'm worried about, the hand. Because I know that I will be using that mouse for the rest of my life. I know once I leave the DI, I'll probably have a decent chair. ...They have different mice now.
> C: Yeah.
> S: That can correct that problem. ... But I'm not worried about the repetitive - not yet. When it starts to really become a problem I might worry about it. ... I suppose I should.

As for Dave, he says he experiences a lot of lower back pain. He, like Stephanie, tries to find a good chair, because "there's some that actually tilt forward, which are messed up, which are broken." His back "burns" sometimes when he goes home at night. "But I've never had any problems with my neck, or anything. And a lot of people will just sit there like that and you'll see them going (sigh) like this [rubbing their necks]." Although Dave and Stephanie are conscious of their pain, they tend to blame the technology itself, as if getting new or comfortable equipment would solve everything. However, there is no real examination by these college newsworkers that their (over)use of this technology - in and out of the newsroom - is the cause of their budding RSIs.

Conclusion

> *It's all about today, because I have no idea if I'm even going to make it till tomorrow* (sign on reporters row, Daily Iowan).

When I ask what advice she'd have for changing and improving the working conditions for student journalists, Stephanie argues, "I don't know if you wanna change it," because "this is a rite of passage. You know I'm gonna have to learn to work this hard because it's probably gonna be worse later on." Fatalism or realism? A little of both, I think, and they're not necessarily unhealthy. Will she apply her critical thinking skills to her own work situation? That could make the difference, I think.

Dave's general advice, though, is somewhat contradictory, much like the student journalist experience itself. On the one hand, he says, "Allow time for yourself." However, he also argues that student journalists need to "realize that sleep is a luxury":

> If you have a big story to do and you have a big paper to write, don't skip on the story, or skip on your paper because you need to sleep. You're in college and this is the time that you're gonna be worn down. I mean, that's part of the college experience is never... having enough sleep in my opinion. So just live life. Just do everything you possibly can.

I find this advice a little scary and fatalistic. Do things really have to be that way? Does being a student really mean no sleep? Does being a journalist really mean brutally hard work? Dave's advice suggests a youthful sense of invulnerability, but also resignation. They're already learning that there's nothing they can do about their working conditions. But, they're at a university where they should be taught that they can do something. I wish my college professors had taught me about the risk of RSI, of acquiring a career-ending disability just because I did my job. That's the dark side of journalism.

However, there's more than that side. As I interview Dave, we talk of how amazing it is the range of people you encounter in the newsroom - their personalities, how they handle deadlines differently, etc. I told him that one of the issues that sticks out for me is "all these different people with all these different backgrounds and different personalities. They have to come together... to put out this thing, called a newspaper."

"Yeah, a common goal," Dave agrees with me.

I can't help but think about these student journalists moving on to the professional journalism world and being replaced by other students. It is a cycle - but whether it's a healthy cycle, or one that marks a cycle of physical alienation we learn as workers is still questionable. It's hard not to be swept up in my nostalgia and the "rush" of energy these journalists have for putting out their newspaper. They experience a great deal of pride in this civic purpose, and enjoyment from the playful banter in the newsroom setting.

Unfortunately, they already are unquestioningly resigning themselves to what they see as the unchangeable demands of journalistic work. And the questions arises of where college newsworkers are learning that this journalistic work will be "worse" later on and that they must suffer through this "rite of passage." Occupational injuries are preventable, and even this preliminary study with its limited findings should be seen as a call-to-arms that college newsworkers are becoming injured before they even leave the university. As students and faculty at a university and in a journalism program, we should be taught ergonomics and other healthy work behaviors - as well as advocating for change in the journalistic and academic workplaces regarding repetitive workload guidelines (see also Jackson, 1992).[28]

As Haraway remarks: "The machine is not an *it* to be animated, worshipped, and dominated. The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; *they* do not dominate or threaten us" (p. 203). We are not cyborgs being taken over by machines. We are humans, grounded in complex human bodies who have invented these machines and who need to carefully examine the work and power contexts of these machines. By grounding our theorizing and our research in disability theory and the diverse realities of living in our bodies, we can begin to make visible the complex, contradictory attitudes and practices involved in how we interact with technology and how a disability such as RSI has come to prominence in the twentieth century.

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[28] For example, Harvard and MIT are creating RSI support groups, information on RSI at freshman orientation, and monthly lectures on RSI (Rimer, 1997).

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